

MANHOOD
INTO GOD

by

FREDERIC HASTINGS SMYTH

"Who although He be God and man: yet He
is not two, but is one Christ; One, however,
not by conversion of Godhead into flesh: but
by taking manhood into God."

—*Athanasian Creed*



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To

A Catholic Comrade

ETHAN ALLAN BROWN

In Recognition of a Long and Fruitful Friendship

PREFACE

DURING a good many years past it has been my privilege as a Priest of the Anglican Communion to give instructions concerning the elementary principles of the Catholic Faith to young men who were, at the same time, working for undergraduate or graduate university degrees. Some of this instruction has been given to single individuals. Some has been given before groups or seminar classes. In the course of this attempt to teach the Faith to students in a fashion best suited to answer the wide range of questions which they have raised, a certain systematic method of presentation has inevitably developed. Out of this teaching experience has emerged the present book.

I sincerely trust that this book contains no "new" theories or doctrines whatever. I write, of course, from a frankly Anglo-Catholic standpoint. I hope, however, that I have succeeded in my intention to be genuinely informative and not controversial. I hope also that some of the relationships between Catholic Dogma and Catholic Practice, which it has been my custom to explain to college students who are facing the problems of the present world environment, may strike a wider public, whether Catholic, Protestant, or secular, with a sense of fresh value. For it is my contention that Catholic Orthodoxy, rather than dissident heterodoxy, is, when rightly understood, the only sure guide to all genuinely new thought, as well as to all fruitfully venturesome action.

Ever since it has been available, I have used Fr. Conrad Noel's *Life of Jesus* as an important text in my work with students. In fact, I have recently come to regard my own instructions, now published here, as in some sense complementary to his book. I think that my own presentation, although it issues from years of work considerably antecedent to the appearance of Fr. Noel's book, is nevertheless similar to his in aim. Fr. Noel's approach to Our Lord's life and work is historical and Biblical. My own, on the other hand, is philosophical and creedal.

So many different students have asked the questions whose answers compose the substance of this book, that it would be impossible to thank them as individuals. They are, none the less, collaborators in the production of this work, for it has been hammered into whatever clarity of form it can claim through long discussions with them in critical conferences. I am also indebted to my fellow members of the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth who, day after day, have patiently listened to me in conversation, and have thus helped me to clarify the questions to which I have attempted to return answers. I owe a particular debt to Mr. John Wild, of the Faculty of Philosophy of Harvard University and an Associate of the same Society. He has given invaluable assistance in meeting philosophical problems which have constantly arisen. He is in no way responsible, of course, for my own inadequacies of presentation, but without his help and his additional suggestions, my own intellectual equipment would scarcely have been adequate to this present work.

I am also indebted to my friend Mr. Edwin Seldon, who has read the entire manuscript and who has ferreted out and helped to clear up a large number of obscurities. He has also read the proofs and has prepared the index.

F. H. S.

*The Oratory of St. Mary and St. Michael,
Cambridge, Massachusetts,
Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
Nineteen hundred and forty.*

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PART ONE

THE INCARNATION AND HISTORY

CATHOLIC DOGMAS AND HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE

AT THE beginning of a series of instructions in the Catholic Religion, we may assume that those who are about to receive them are ready to start with a belief in the existence of God. For our present purpose we do not need to go behind this assumed belief in order either to explore its philosophical foundations or to give it some persuasive, apologetic support. We shall, therefore, start now as does the first Chapter of the Book of Genesis: In the beginning, God.¹

We need not, on the other hand, start our enquiry with the further assumption that we are all agreed together upon some particularizing statements or creedal definitions covering that Being whom we call God. On the contrary, it is precisely these creedal definitions which we now wish to examine and thus draw forth as fully as possible both their clear intellectual content and their practical implications. When we recite the Catholic Creeds we make fairly elaborate doctrinal statements. The Creeds sum up in brief, very compact and precise expression,

¹ It will be well to say, however, that Catholics are expected to believe in the existence of the God whom they worship, upon rational grounds. According to Catholic teaching, belief in the existence of God can be arrived at *with certainty* through the light of the natural intellect alone. In reaching this certain conclusion, the intellect proceeds to reason from knowledge which is given to it by created things. Knowledge of God's existence and, for that matter, knowledge of His principal attributes, is arrived at with certainty in the manner in which a cause is always known, through its effects. This means that God's existence is to be acknowledged, and His principal attributes are to be understood with certainty, quite apart from special revelation and without the exercise, on the part of man, of any supernatural faith. The natural reason alone suffices for the complete establishment of these elemental facts.

This point is important in an age in which so many contend that God, if He be known at all, is to be known only subjectively and because of some inner religious experience or assurance which transcends the natural human reason. On the contrary, Catholics must ever assert that the natural reason of man, alone in itself and unaided by revelation or supernatural help, suffices to give certainty of God's existence.

See St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I^a, Quaest. 2. One of the best recent treatments of this subject is by R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., in his *God: His Existence and Nature*. 2 Vols. Herder Book Co., St. Louis and London, 1934.

what the Catholic Church believes about the Nature of that God who is the Object of her worship. It is thus that both revealed and rational philosophical truths about God are safely enshrined in clear terms, in order that such truths may be safeguarded, preserved and made available to all succeeding human generations. But if we ourselves are to use these creedal statements profitably and intelligently, we must first understand quite clearly not only how and why they came to be formulated, but also what the practical fulfilment of these seemingly complicated statements must inevitably imply for our personal, everyday lives. Furthermore, in this latter consideration, we shall have to think of personal, everyday life as a whole, that is, to some extent at least, in its practical, its aesthetic, its intellectual, its moral and its devotional aspects.

In order, therefore, to appreciate more fully the extent of what is implied in every theological statement in the Creeds, it will be profitable to consider in brief outline the historical development of one of them, and for this purpose we may select for fuller examination the Dogma of the Blessed Trinity.

The so-called Athanasian Creed, to which, of course, the American Church, together with the rest of the Anglican Communion is committed,² states "And the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity." Such a statement in a Catholic Creed, based as it is upon the records of the Biblical literature, represents the most complete knowledge that man possesses concerning the Nature of God.

² The Athanasian Creed, or, more properly, the *Quicunque Vult*, printed in the English Book of Common Prayer, directed to be recited in Church on a large number of Feast Days and confirmed as "thoroughly to be received and believed" in the Eighth Article of Religion, is omitted from the American Prayer Book. The omission was probably partly due to a distaste, on the part of the Revisers of the American Book, for such precise definitions of doctrine as this Creed contains; but it was chiefly due to a dislike of the anathemas or condemnatory clauses directed against non-believers, with which the Creed opens and closes. However, the American Prayer Book Preface of 1789 commits the Church to this Creed also, because it is here stated that "this (the American) Church is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline, or worship; or further than local circumstances require." It can hardly be claimed that a repudiation of the *Quicunque Vult* is required by "local circumstances." But in any case the Dogma of the Blessed Trinity is stated with equal emphasis in both the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds, which are included in the American Book of Common Prayer.

Primitive religious experience, on the other hand, certainly did not begin with any such well-developed conceptions of God, still less with reasoned beliefs concerning Him or with precise creedal definitions. According to the high authority of Professor Otto,³ man's most primitive religious consciousness arose in an overpowering but nevertheless simple experience, which was a direct and stark sense or "feeling" that on certain occasions he stood suddenly face to face with a deep and terrific reality which lay behind, above or beyond the ordinary world of his everyday life. Primitive man experienced keenly something which can scarcely be absent from the occasional experience of every man and woman even now. He felt the approach of something awesome, mysterious, uncanny and weird; something, perhaps, to make the flesh creep and the hair rise, some "Numinous Reality," as Otto calls it, lurking, as it were, behind the scenes of that immediately and sensually known drama of his commonplace, everyday life. Probably, from the very dawn of human consciousness men have felt themselves impelled, as Job was impelled by the Voice speaking from out the whirlwind, to bow down in awestruck worship, when in moments of special religious awareness they have found themselves in that mysterious Presence, clearly realized as something transcending all other experience. They have been impelled to this worship because, with an unreasoned but none the less direct and profound intuition of the truth, they have sensed here the presence of a Reality upon which their own very existence in some way depends.

By many people, even in our own day, this vague but often overpowering and awesome experience, of a Presence which seems to transcend not only their own lives but the whole physical universe as well, of a Presence which imparts a sense of our utter dependence upon it and which calls forth our humble adoration, is considered to be religious experience in its deepest and purest form. To such people, attempts to investigate the character of that Reality which is the object of their worship, still more, attempts to set forth its nature in intellectual concepts or philosophical formulae, seem unnecessary complica-

³ *The Idea of the Holy*. English Translation by John W. Harvey. Oxford, 1923.

tions. To them, the statements about the Nature of God which are enshrined in the Catholic Creeds, seem to "darken counsel by words without knowledge."⁴ These statements thus appear not only irrelevant to what they call "pure" religion, but actually to stand as barriers in the way of a direct approach to God.

People who think in this way often hesitate even to assert that the object of their religious worship has any personal quality whatever. They would hesitate to assert, for example, that they worshipped a Being possessed of either mind or will, in the sense in which these words are usually understood. They believe that it is best to leave the object of their worship undefined. It is, of course, admitted that some people do think of God as a personal Being. Others may think of Him as "Universal Mind," as "Universal Force" or, perhaps, only as the vaguely emerging higher corporate aspirations of mankind, as these struggle for an ever fuller idealistic and practical expression in history. However, in this view, no generalizations based upon various individual opinions about the Nature of God should be thought of as valid for other individuals. Each individual's conception of the God of his religious experience can be thought of as "valid," by which, more often than not, is merely meant "helpful," for that individual alone. Such men and women at the present time are still content to worship the "Unknown God."

Nevertheless, throughout all history, people of the greatest religious insight, the greatest philosophers and the greatest prophets, the greatest saints, together with the Catholic Church speaking with the voice of her corporate authority, have always replied to these worshippers of the Unknown God in the words with which St. Paul replied to the Athenians, speaking to them in the midst of the Areopagus: "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him I declare unto you."⁵ For it appears neither desirable nor entirely intelligent to suggest that man should be content to worship God without wishing to learn anything rational about Him. An analogous attitude is never maintained in other human affairs. Rational man has never been content to

⁴ Job 38:2.

⁵ Acts of the Apostles 17:23.

enter into any given experience without immediately attempting to analyze it, trying to discover as much as possible about all its various elements as these confront him, and about the parts which he himself has played in that experience. As a matter of fact, this has been no less true of his religious experiences. And his attempts to state these experiences in terms of rational concepts are not to be deplored, but rather to be encouraged and praised. Thus the history of the development of the religions of mankind may be viewed as a history of man's growth in rational understanding of the Nature of God and of his own relationships to Him; that God who, at the outset of man's religious quest, was but ignorantly and blindly worshipped.

Probably man's earliest reasoned discovery about God derived from the fact that in worshipping Him he felt that he was entering into some sort of personal relationship with another conscious being. When he considered this relationship, it seemed akin or analogous to certain social relationships experienced with other human beings. Such a conclusion by no means necessitated the further one that the object of man's worship must Himself be another, although invisible, human being. That is to say, it did not necessarily imply an idea of God in the form of man, an anthropomorphic projection of man's own idea of himself into the place of his God. Nevertheless, since personal relationships are experienced only with other persons, a personal relationship with the object of one's worship inevitably leads to the logical conclusion that God is to be regarded as a Being to whom the attributes of what we call "personality" may in some sense be ascribed. So much was true in the thought of primitive man. However, when it came further to be asked what kind of Person this God might be, many and various answers were returned.

Although to conclude that the Being whom we worship is in some sense a personal Being does not, as has just been said, compel us to conclude that He is very similar to ourselves, nevertheless, this conclusion is entirely possible for simple minds. It is, in fact, one which primitive people very often drew. Primitive men, again in common with certain ignorant and naive people of our own day, were inclined to regard God very much

as another human being, even to the point of possessing a physical body, although, of course, God was thought of as fashioned on a much grander and more formidable scale than man. Also, in primitive and ancient religions, God is not necessarily thought of as better, in a moral sense, than ordinary men. If God is to be loved and worshipped because He may at times be kind and good and loyal to His devotees, He is also to be feared and propitiated with gifts and sacrifices, because at other times He can be cruel, revengeful and exceedingly capricious. In this view, God is a person with whom it is necessary to "get along" as one gets along with one's fellow men, except that in the case of God this may be at once more difficult and more dangerous, because power and knowledge seem to be chiefly on the side of God.

In addition, most people of the ancient world felt a personal relationship with God emerging within a great many different situations. For example, they sensed His presence in the background while they were engaged in agricultural work. They felt Him to be immanent in the revolving seasons of the year, riding upon the wings of storms and tempests, or more calmly revealed in the sunshine of the open fields. They sensed His presence while they were hunting in forests, or again in quite different ways within the intimacies of the home and of family relationships. They felt God's presence sometimes in the midst of the tumult of battles, sometimes in the beauty and tranquility of a summer sea. It is not surprising, therefore, when the minds of men reasoned about these varied religious experiences, mediated by such a wide diversity of circumstances, that the conclusion was drawn that the God of these experiences was not one Person, but rather a society of individual persons, a Pantheon of gods and goddesses, with the addition of hosts of other beings, demigods and goddesses, such as satyrs and nymphs, in almost infinite variety. It seemed logical, for example, to believe that there should be a god whose special province it was to preside over family relationships, and other gods and goddesses who might be encountered more particularly in agricultural work, in seasons of sowing and of harvest. It seemed logical to conclude that there should be a god to rule the violence of the

ocean, another to give victory in battles, another to direct the hunt. In this manner, doubtless, there arose the polytheistic religions of the ancient world. That is, these religions developed with men's attempts to reason logically about the nature of that "Unknown God," who from the beginning had been the Numinous Reality behind all primitive religious experience. And the data men used in this reasoning were the ordinary, but highly varied experiences of everyday life.

Although most primitive people concluded eventually that there were almost as many separate gods and goddesses as there were situations in which Deity seemed to draw near to man, nevertheless, even in some of the remotest periods of which we have record, there have lived religious leaders, men of deep spiritual insight, who taught that behind all the manifold experiences of these many deities, there existed an underlying unity. Some men at least, even in very early times, in spite of all superficial appearances in the world around them, and of all contemporary popular notions to the contrary, began to believe that the Being of God might nevertheless be single and indivisible. Beneath the varied manifestations of God which, in primitive reasoning, had led to polytheistic religions, such men began to discern a profound unifying principle. Beliefs in gods and goddesses, many and various, began to merge into a conception of the Being of God as One.

Hand in hand with man's increasing realization of God's essential unity there developed an ever clearer and wider apprehension of His attributes. For one thing, man ceased to think of God in those crude and primitive concepts which tended to describe Him in terms appropriate to some great and powerful human being, some exaggerated projection of man's own ideas about himself. God, while ever more definitely apprehended as a personal Being, because of the personal relationships in which He stood to those who knew Him, ceased to be thought of as adequately describable in terms of magnified human qualities. Man began to realize that God was a Being infinitely beyond his power to comprehend Him. He, unlike man, was at last apprehended as a Being of pure Spirit. This being true, human beings could be thought of as in some sense "like" God, in that

they are intelligent, rational and free beings. Therefore, it continued to be believed that, because of this likeness, God could and did communicate some knowledge of Himself to man. Nevertheless, it was also clearly enough seen that God, for His part, could not in any way be described as "like" man.⁶ God had made man, as the author of Genesis puts it, in His own image, but this by no means implied that God existed in the image of man. In other words, perhaps by the time that Zarathustra was teaching in ancient Persia, and certainly by the time the later parts of the Book of Genesis were taking form, the anthropomorphic quality of primitive thought about God was giving place to what might instead be termed a certain theomorphic quality in man's religious apprehension of his own human nature. It is in this discovery of man's true relationship to God that the idea of God as the Father of mankind has its roots.

The realization of God's essential Oneness brought inevitably its correlative conception of His exclusive and universal character. Historically, however, this idea was a somewhat later development, because, even in the days when the great Prophets of Israel were proclaiming: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is One,"⁷ this God of the Hebrew nation continued to be thought of as primarily a national Deity. While He was considered by the Hebrews to be the most powerful of all possible deities, for a good many centuries it did not seem to them inconsistent to believe, at the same time, that tribal and place gods and goddesses of other nations had, for their part also, a genuine existence. The Jews were merely forbidden to have anything to do with other gods, an injunction which, as a matter of fact, in spite of Prophetic warnings and denunciations, they sometimes forgot and sometimes ignored. Nevertheless, by the time of the centuries immediately preceding our own era, the God of Israel, whose Temple stood at Jerusalem, was thought of by the Jews as in some sense a universal God. It was true that He was not yet so known outside the limits of Israel, but it was recognized by all who held the Prophetic Religion, that the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, was not merely One, but also an Only

⁶ Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas: *Summa Theologica*, I^a, Quaest. 4. Art. II, Ad. 4.

⁷ Deut. 6:4; quoted by Our Lord, Mark 12:29.

God. He was, to be sure, a God with whom Israel stood in a peculiar, covenanted relationship; but He was also, at least potentially, a God and ruler, not only of the Hebrew nation, but of all nations, a God and ruler over all the earth.

With the realization of God's essential unity and of His universal character, there gradually developed a knowledge of the moral perfection of His Nature. From very early times, even among the peoples of polytheistic religions, the gods had often been looked upon as the makers or moulders of the universe. The earliest Creation story of the Bible, which is originally partly from pagan sources, and of far more ancient origin than that Book of Genesis of which it now forms the opening section, speaks of God as the Creator of the physical world and of all living things within it, plants and beasts and men. It required, however, the deeper insight of the later writers or editors of Genesis to avoid and to correct the earlier error of believing that God, as Creator of the world, could be thought of as, through His own will, not only the source of all that was found perfect and good, but also of that which seemed to be imperfect and bad within His creation. Most pagans and heathen peoples have always believed that at least some of the powers which formed the world are themselves positively bad and wicked. As a matter of fact, the gods of ancient religious cultures often shared the moral faults of ordinary human beings. Indeed, their faults and moral weaknesses were usually on a grander and more heroic scale than mere mortals could themselves achieve. Furthermore, in earlier times, as also unfortunately, nowadays, it has seemed to many people quite possible to establish some sort of religious relationships with a supernatural power while remaining none the less utterly oblivious to the fact that religious experience should influence very definitely the conduct of practical, everyday life and the quality of all mutual human relationships in this world. Thus, man's religious consciousness takes a tremendous step forward as he realizes the moral perfection of God, that He is in Himself the source of all good and the source of no evil whatsoever, and as he grows in knowledge of what these latter facts demand in the conduct of human relationships.

It was the glory of the Hebrew people that among them there arose those great Prophets who, with an authentic revelation, confirmed this knowledge of the Unity, the Universality and the Moral Perfection of God. From the time of Moses onward, they, foremost among all other religious leaders, announced with progressive clarity and fullness that the God of Israel was a God of absolute perfection, the fountainhead of all goodness, all beauty and all truth, and that He was thus the source of these values, whenever and wherever made actual among men.

And, with equal and unfaltering emphasis, they likewise proclaimed that the God of their revelation could be served and worshipped only by a human community which was attempting to manifest His Divine perfection within the practical social and economic relationships of everyday life. A God of love, justice and mercy, He could never be adequately worshipped by men who gave a mere intellectual assent to these attributes of His Being. He was more than a God of intellectual abstractions. In the Prophetic view, the God of Israel was, by all means, to be approached both in public and private prayer and in the formal worship of His Temple in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, if He was thought of as a God of love, this did not mean love in general, felt as a kind of pious but sterile sentiment. It meant rather that He delighted only in men who loved one another in all relationships of life, and, furthermore, that He permitted Himself to be approached only along avenues of His love practically expressed in human, social living. Again, His truth and His justice signified that all who would draw near to Him must first be truthful and just in their dealings with their fellow men. And it had been increasingly clear from the time of Abraham and the initiation of the Covenant of the Circumcision, which established a corporate relationship between God and His Chosen People,⁸ that it was the peculiar vocation of the latter to offer up their worship, not solely as individuals, but also corporately, as a Holy Nation, welded together into a social organ-

⁸ It should be noted that the Jews were a Chosen People under a Covenant with God not primarily by birth in a nation or a race, but by virtue of the rite of Circumcision, received individually by every male child. This was an appointed sign that the child was removed from an isolated individual status, and taken into the corporate social body of Israel.

ism under that same Covenant. This meant, therefore, that Israel's God must be served through the establishment of a unified economic and social order, within which His justice, His mercy and His truth should be socially fulfilled. Without this social and economic fulfilment, so the Prophets always taught, all formal public worship, all private prayer and all socially separated and individualistically pious service of God, however earnest and well-intentioned, must at best remain mutilated activities, and at worst of little or of none effect. If thus separated from corporate practical expression, such individualistic religion might even lead dangerously on to an utter corruption of the Religion of the Covenant.⁹ Thus, Israel realized in ancient times that the service of God could never be fulfilled in a mere sentimental attachment to Him.

The religious relationships just described, between God and His Chosen People, were thought of under the beautiful analogy of the relationships which a human father has with his children, with his children's families and with all his other descendants. In this connection, when we in our turn adopt this same human analogy, it would be well to recall that the Jews were always thinking of fatherhood in terms of their own ancient patriarchal family institutions. Within the patriarchal family, a father loved and provided for his children. He also ruled over an entire clan as governor, within multiple, extended and complex social relationships. Furthermore, within his sphere of family authority, his power was absolute, extending even to the power of life and death. Therefore, social order, as well as individual obedience, is implied in the kind of fatherly relationship signified by the analogy of the Heavenly Fatherhood of God. And the thunderous warnings of the Prophets, that dire punishments awaited those who corrupted the Covenant of the Circumcision through social disobedience, were in no way inconsistent with a true expression of God's fatherly love.¹⁰ On the other hand, to His loyal and devoted people, to those who worshipped Him not only in the appointed rites of His ancient sacrificial cult,

⁹ Cf. Amos 5:21-24.

¹⁰ It has been humorously suggested that modern Christians may be in danger of sentimentalizing the idea of the Fatherhood of God into something which could be more aptly described as "The Divine Papahood"!

but also in an appointed social and economic orderliness which would reflect His supreme will, to those who prayed to Him not only with their lips but in the conduct of their lives, God, while ruling transcendently, had none the less ever responded as does a loving human father to his children. He had been found faithful in guiding and guarding, enlightening, correcting and protecting, the Children of Israel; and He held ever before them His promise of an eventual, complete redemption, the embracing of them as a Holy Nation within the mighty power of His own perfect rule.

Such, in all too meagre outline, are those truths concerning God, which, together with the full richness of their historical content clarified, purified and enlarged through untold generations of human religious experience, came to their fullest summary and expression in the concept of the Divine Fatherhood, established finally in the Prophetic Religion of the Hebrew nation. That "One God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible," announced in the Catholic Creeds as the absolute Object of the Church's present worship, was thus already known as the God of Israel, two thousand years ago, when Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem of Judea.

In the midst of a people which acknowledged, at least intellectually and formally, the Divine Fatherhood of God, the Man Jesus Christ was born. However, His nation, the Hebrew nation, had not succeeded in realizing its efforts to live up to its revealed social vocation. In other words, the worship of God had become formalized, and the national life, social and economic, had failed to achieve in human living a visible and practical expression of the perfection of that God and Father whom Israel pretended to worship. It is true that much of the ancient beauty of the Hebrew Religion still survived. Much of its ancient poetry and romance, together with much of its power to fire men's imaginations and to spur them on to social improvement, were still present. But ancient laws, originally intended to give social expression to God's attributes of justice and love, laws such as those against the amassing of swollen private for-

tunes in landed estates, prohibitions against the taking of interest on loans, laws forbidding the expropriation of the property of the poor, all such laws had been carefully rationalized and interpreted so as to make them ineffectual.¹¹ A relatively small class of privileged and wealthy people had arisen, and to make matters worse, these were the very people who acted as official interpreters of the laws which they mocked and set aside in nearly every fundamental practice of their corporate life. Within the social structure as it actually existed, the poor were becoming poorer and the rich more arrogantly rich. As a class, they cared little or nothing for the human misery of that other class which was steadily increasing on every side, upon the continuation of whose misery, indeed, the well-being of the rich had actually come to depend.

Nevertheless, within this nation, which in social practice seemed almost to have forgotten the God whom the ancient Prophets had revealed, there did still exist a relatively small group of people, a saving remnant,¹² who looked for the salvation of Israel. Surrounded by an appalling social denial of the fundamental truths of their religion, they kept alive their faith that the God of Israel would soon vindicate His justice and His love within the nation's life; that He could not be mocked forever by self-willed men. However, when they considered how far their nation as a whole had strayed from a social fulfilment of the Divine plan, they perceived that the social vindication of God must almost certainly involve a dreadful and catastrophic revolution in most of the practical and economic arrangements of their day. To their credit, be it said, they were prepared to look forward even to this catastrophe, and to accept it when it came. With great hope they awaited the coming of the Messiah, the Deliverer, the Anointed of God, the Christ.

That Jesus was born among people of this outlook is perhaps shown most clearly by that song which St. Luke puts into the mouth of His Lady Mother at the time of His conception: "My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God

¹¹ Our Lord reproached both Scribes and Pharisees for "making the law of none effect through your tradition"; that is, through legalistic ruses and nullifying interpretations. (Mark 7:13.)

¹² Cf. Luke 2:38.

my Saviour. For He hath regarded the lowliness of His Hand-maiden. For behold, from henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath magnified me and holy is His Name. And His mercy is on them that fear Him throughout all generations. He hath shewed strength with His arm: He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seat and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things and the rich He hath sent empty away. He remembering His mercy hath holpen His servant Israel, as He promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, forever."¹³

Here is the cry of one who feels poignantly the monstrous injustices entrenched in her contemporary social environment. It is the cry of one who welcomes the promise of having those injustices righted through practical action, by means of which the oppressed and hungry should be filled, and those who were rich through the special privileges of an unjust order should be sent empty away by the very Son she was about to bear. So too, the aged Simeon, singing his *Nunc Dimittis* in the Temple, bears his witness also to this same hope of social salvation, introducing at the same time a prophecy of its universal, world-wide nature.¹⁴ Although Simeon knows that he cannot live to see the fruition of his hopes, yet he gives thanks as he receives the infant Jesus in his arms,¹⁵ because he has been permitted before his death to see the One who, as he knows in a prophetic intuition, shall bring about those far-reaching and profound changes for which he longs. And Elizabeth, the kinswoman of Mary, by her greeting when Mary comes to visit her: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb," shows that she too shares the convictions and the hopes of this same group of people.

It was among orthodox Jews of this profound religious in-

¹³ Luke 1:46-55. We cannot be sure that St. Mary composed the hymn called *Magnificat* on the spur of the moment, as St. Luke's story seems to suggest. This is not at all incredible, however, since the phrases are taken from earlier and familiar sources (The Song of Hannah, I Sam. 2). In any event, the song certainly expresses her mind and the mind of the Redemptionist Group, of which she was a member.

¹⁴ Luke 2:32.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 2:8.

sight, among those who understood both the national dereliction of Israel and the crying necessities of the times, that Our Lord passed His life from infancy, through youth and the early maturity of manhood. He seems to have been a child in a household of wood-working artisans,¹⁶ living in a little village of Galilee. He grew up among working people, and knew intimately the conditions of life among workers of many different callings. He knew fishermen, agricultural workers, artisans of villages and towns. He also knew how people without regular employment got their living, as porters, or by doing odd jobs and casual work.¹⁷ With such a family and such a social and religious background, it is not surprising that Our Lord's sympathies should have been with those forces which were already trying to recall the Hebrew nation to its Divine vocation under the Old Covenant. As He grew and matured in mind and spirit, He did, in fact, as we well know, discover that He was called to play a very special and an utterly decisive part in this redemption of Israel.

Now it was also true that the Jewish nation as a whole, following ancient prophecy, did itself cherish a hope for the appearance in its midst of a redeeming Saviour, a Messiah who would draw Israel out of every present ill. But in that conventional, traditional, one might almost say official hope, which was held by most Jews outside of Our Lord's particular and specially discerning circle, the national redemption was conceived not so much in terms of a changed individual and corporate social morality, as in terms of the setting up of a new and powerful military kingdom, a conquering and imperial Jewish State, compulsively welded into strong unity under a Leader bestowed and empowered by God. Such a state, we, in looking back upon this nationalistic dream from our own present point in history, might be tempted to liken to a kind of universal, imperialistic, "Divine Fascism." The coming Messiah would, of course, be expected not only to throw off the Roman yoke, but also to place Rome in subjection to Jerusalem. Furthermore, because

¹⁶ Mark 6:3. See Bishop Headlam's *The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ*, London, 1927, (2nd ed.) p. 95.

¹⁷ Cf. The parable of the laborers in the vineyard. Matt. 20:1-7.

of this prevalent hope, certain adventurous leaders within Our Lord's own generation had found it relatively easy to proclaim themselves liberators of the nation, and by collecting about themselves bodies of other enthusiasts, visionaries and malcontents, they had attempted to set themselves up in armed, pseudo-Messianic leaderships. They had succeeded, however, in little more than causing minor insurrections or disorders, which were easily put down.¹⁸

It was clear to Our Lord that something, not only much more radical than sporadic, armed demonstrations, but also something very different from political and military leadership, was required for the redemption of Israel. It was also clear, not only to Him, but also to those relatively few people of whom we have been speaking who made up His particular and more intimate social environment, that something much more was required than a fresh prophetic recall of Israel to their God. For it had begun to seem vaguely credible to some, at least, that the people of the Covenant might have lost the power of returning to God through their own unaided efforts, even were they once more to be led by a new Prophet to make the attempt. Thus it was that Jesus set out, not only to point the way to Israel's return, but, as we shall presently see, to make this return possible of actual achievement.

At a later point we shall consider much more fully the nature of Our Lord's redeeming activity and the method which He proposes for Israel's return to a full and perfect relationship with His Father. At this point, since we are thinking primarily of the development of the historical experience upon which the Church's Dogma of the Blessed Trinity is based, we shall confine our attention, first, to a consideration of the personal impression which Our Lord made upon those who observed and followed Him in the unfolding of His ministry among men, and second, to a consideration of the conclusions which, with the passage of time, they drew concerning His Nature, concerning who and what He was, and concerning His own peculiar relationship to the God of Israel, who, of course, was already known to His followers as both His and their God.

¹⁸ *E.g.*, "Theudas" and "Judas of Galilee," referred to in Acts 5:36-37.

A point to bear in mind here is that Jesus began His ministry entirely within the framework of the ancient religion of Israel. In His own approach to His problem He presupposed all those teachings concerning God and all the social implications of those teachings which we have just been studying; and He came into public view against the immediate social and economic background which in outline we have just described. Furthermore, He began His active work in a very quiet and directly personal manner. He collected no ambitious group of young men about Himself, who, inspired by nationalistic patriotism and anxious for immediate revolutionary change, might have attempted to bring this about by physical force. He began, rather, by gathering together a small band of working and artisan class people, people of independent and sturdy character, who came to stand in such relationship to Him that He liked to refer to them quite simply as His friends. At the outset of His ministry and during its earlier stages, there can scarcely have been even the faintest notion in the minds of His followers of that relationship of Our Lord's Person to God which is expressed in the Catholic Dogma of the Incarnation. When one day, for example, Jesus accosted the fishermen Simon and Andrew at work with their nets in the waters of the Sea of Galilee,¹⁹ these men certainly could have had no complete idea of the Nature of the Man who stood before them. We are compelled to believe, of course, that Jesus, the wood-worker of Nazareth, was unmistakably a man of compelling personality. He must have impressed many who came in contact with Him that He had qualities of leadership far beyond those of any usual man. There must have been something about Him which inspired an immediate confidence, not only in His personal integrity, but also in His capacity to lead successfully those who might follow Him, on to some great accomplishment. He must have been a most attractive person both in appearance and manner. How else is it possible to explain the ready response of men like Simon and Andrew, or immediately after them, of James and John, to His summons? But it would be absurd to imagine that these simple Jewish fishermen, or indeed any of the other working class or

¹⁹ Mark 1:16.

middle class people who subsequently threw in their lot with Him, could have thought of Him as the Incarnation of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity made flesh. The very concept of such an Incarnation would have been utterly foreign to their mode of thought. If they did from the beginning, as it would seem, expect at least dimly that Jesus might turn out to be the Messiah of their traditional Jewish hope, yet even here the idea of an Incarnation of God by no means entered. These orthodox Jews who followed Jesus were already well-instructed in the Prophetic teaching concerning the God whom they knew and worshipped. They had entered into personal relationships with this God in worship and in prayer. They knew Him as their Father in Heaven. To have suggested to them that this God should stand on earth, revealing Himself visibly, clothed in human flesh, would doubtless have shocked them profoundly. The experience of men with Jesus Christ began as a simple, human, although certainly a very vivid and profound experience of men with another man.

The followers of Our Lord, then, seem to have belonged to that group within the Jewish nation which we have been describing, which felt keenly the national dereliction, the scandalous failure of Israel to fulfil its social and religious vocation. The disciples threw in their lot with Jesus in a new enthusiasm for a religious and patriotic task, feeling that they had found in Him a heaven-sent, human leader of outstanding and compelling Prophetic character. However, as we follow the Gospel records of the development of Our Lord's ministry, we sense the fact that the disciples came gradually to know Him in another way. Somehow or other, as little by little they saw His works and heard Him speak; as they understood not only more and more of His immediate aims, but also of the content of His mind and the richness of His spirit, a new note crept into their attitude toward Him. We can see Him becoming for them something more than a leader, more indeed than a Prophet, more than an inspired and an inspiring teacher, more, even, than an amazingly profound revealer of that God whom, as orthodox Jews, they already knew and worshipped.

It was not alone among the immediate followers of Jesus that

questions concerning His Person were being asked. As Our Lord and His little group of disciples journeyed about Palestine they attracted an increasing amount of attention both from the masses of the common people, who "heard Him gladly,"²⁰ and also from the established political and religious authorities as well. Jesus and His teachings caused a buzz of excited speculation on every hand, and He was regarded with an increasing uneasiness by Jewish officialdom. Who and what, it was asked, was this person who had now appeared among them? Whence was His very evident—for some, His all too evident—power, and whence that impression of authority which He conveyed to all who saw Him?²¹ "By what authority," He was asked, "doest thou these things? or who gave thee this authority?"

Eventually the clear and direct answer to these questions, an answer which Our Lord Himself had not yet proffered, came from the disciples themselves. It was definitely elicited by Our Lord, but it was put into words by St. Peter. This happened one day when Our Lord was walking with His disciples in the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi. The disciples, in talking to Him, had begun to relate some of the gossip and speculation that was going the rounds. They must have been recounting some of the talk that they themselves had heard and very likely some of the enquiries to which they had been asked, now and again, to give answers. "Whom do men say that I am?" Our Lord had asked them.²² And they had replied: "Some say John the Baptist; some Elijah; and others Jeremiah or one of the Prophets." We are told elsewhere in the Gospels²³ that some people had even suspected Him of being a person either demented or in league with the Devil. It is significant that it had apparently become increasingly difficult for any one who knew Jesus, or even knew about Him, to remain neutral in this question concerning His identity, or to assume a personally detached or disinterested attitude in the matter.

But now, it would seem, the moment had at last arrived in

²⁰ Mark 12:37.

²¹ Mark 1:22.

²² Matt. 16:13.

²³ *E.g.*, John 8:48-52; Luke 11:15.

which Jesus thought it proper that His disciples should definitely express their own belief about Him. The time had come in which those men who had known Him intimately and constantly for the space of about two years,²⁴ should themselves put into definite words the opinions or conclusions which had been slowly but inevitably taking shape in their own minds. Our Lord paused in the midst of this conversation. He seemed to brush aside all the talk about other people's opinions, and, turning to the group of His disciples, said directly, almost bluntly, "But who say ye that I am?" This must have been a breath-taking moment, the disciples hardly daring to reply to a question to which they suddenly knew they must give such an astounding, even world-shaking answer. We can imagine the brief and dramatic silence which must have come upon them. Then slowly the clear light dawned upon the understanding of Simon Peter, and it was given to him to make explicit that conviction which had been maturing secretly in the hearts of all of them. He fell on his knees and, in wonderment and awe replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."²⁵

This great event, which culminated with St. Peter's confession, has well been called the turning point, the "water-shed" of the Gospel history. For an amazing thing which had been happening, silently in the disciples' consciousness and over a considerable period of time, was now, as it were, brought into the open by Simon Peter. These orthodox Jews, after accompanying for something like two years with Our Lord, in intimate and daily converse with Him during that period, were now clearly confronted by the strange realization that certain concepts which they had previously held as reserved alone to the God of Israel—that is to say, all authoritative values, religious, moral, intellectual, practical, which until that time they could have attributed only to the God of their fathers—these

²⁴ The total length of Our Lord's public ministry has been variously estimated as from one to three years. The question is discussed in the standard Biblical Commentaries, *e.g.*, Peake and the *New Commentary*, edited by Bishop Gore. The best judgments of scholars would seem to concur in a ministry of almost, if not quite, three years duration. For a brief discussion of this see also Headlam, *op. cit.* Appended note, p. 319.

²⁵ Matt. 16:16.

concepts they suddenly discovered themselves attributing to this very Man who stood before them in the flesh.²⁶

It is evident from the further Gospel records, that the disciples, after St. Peter's first breath-taking statement, could scarcely have understood the full implication of what was there acknowledged. It is very improbable, for example, that even St. Peter himself would have thought of Our Lord's Person as identified with the Creator of the Universe. But what the disciples did begin to understand was that those profound and far-reaching personal religious relationships which throughout their lives they had realized and, indeed, could realize only with their God, were now being realized in some extraordinary manner with this Man who was at the same time their brother human being and their friend. And they thus began to know that in response to that dire need of redemption in which the world stood, a need which they, together with a relatively few of their co-religionists, most clearly understood and longed to have met, God, at long last, had actually come to the rescue in the form of Man.

This, again all too briefly, sets forth that great discovery and experience of human beings with God, which, together with all the subsequent enrichment brought by its completer understanding, the Church eventually felt must necessarily be preserved in any adequately complete statement concerning the Being of God. God, it must forever be asserted, is not only God the Father coming to His full revelation in the experience of Israel. He is also God appearing visibly in the flesh, the Man Jesus who trod the earth of Palestine nineteen centuries ago, perfect Man and also perfect God: He who was and is, following St. Peter's great confession, "The Christ, The Son of the living God."

Time passed. Our Lord completed His work here on earth. "He was crucified." "He rose again from the dead." "He ascended into heaven," that is, He withdrew from His visible

²⁶ For an excellent treatment of this development of the belief of the first disciples, see in this connection, Bishop Gore's *Belief in Christ*, Chapter II, the first three sections.

activities in the world of men. All these historical facts are simply recorded in the Creeds, as they are also recorded from a still earlier date, in the Gospel narratives and in even earlier references in the Epistles of St. Paul. The little group of His friends, composing the Catholic Church in embryo, as it were, now left in the world with the task committed to it of carrying on that work which He had begun while still present in the flesh, repaired once more to Jerusalem. These men and women seem to have kept close together, waiting expectantly for some indication to be given them of the course of action which it might be God's will for them to undertake.²⁷ By the Resurrection of Our Lord, they had already been reassured after the despair occasioned by Calvary, and they were filled with the enthusiastic conviction that Our Lord's magnificent triumph over apparent defeat and over death itself, must certainly be intended to bear tangible fruit within their own future lives. They waited with an assured hope for a clearer guidance as to what this fruit might be; for they now recalled that Our Lord had, on more than one occasion, promised a special outpouring of the Spirit of God upon them, "The Spirit of Truth," a special gift of His strength and enlightening guidance for the continuance of His work.

This Gift of the Holy Spirit was sent to them, as the Book of the Acts of the Apostles records, at Pentecost. The infant Church, founded and formed by Our Lord in His lifetime, was now baptised and informed by the Holy Spirit.²⁸

From the time of this great Pentecostal event onward, the Church found herself being continually led and guided by this same indwelling Holy Spirit. She found herself not only being guided in practical activity,²⁹ in planning, in missionary and evangelical enterprise. The Church also found herself being led forward into an ever broadening, an ever richer and deeper understanding, both intellectual and spiritual, of all that Our Lord had said and done while He was still on earth.³⁰ Much that He had done and much that He had said had already been

²⁷ Acts 1:13-14.

²⁸ Acts 2:1-4.

²⁹ For examples, cf. Acts 13:2, 4; 15:28; 16:6.

³⁰ E.g., Acts 4:5-13.

understood with an immediate insight sufficient for those who were present at the time. But all these things now gradually took on a deeper and a far wider significance, often with new meanings and new truths, heretofore present but still hidden, emerging into a new and ever clearer light in the developing experience of the Church. And so, in the fullness of time, the Church once more put into words this additional truth which she had been led to understand about the Being of God, namely, that God, in the Person of His Holy Spirit, had guided and was continuing to guide the Faithful with a very special and covenanted Providence, as Our Lord had already promised during His human lifetime "into all Truth."³¹

It is clear, then, that the Catholic doctrine of God as a Triune Unity, Three Persons and One God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, enshrines an age-long human experience. It enshrines a double experience of men seeking God by the light of their rational intellects, "if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him";³² and also of God revealing Himself to men, as they have been able to apprehend His Self-revelation, appropriating this into their developing systems of natural knowledge, of philosophical thought, of corporate social consciousness, of religious devotion and of liturgical worship. And this experience, whose two terms, the Divine and the human, are mutually perfectly complementary, and whose beginnings are lost in the mists of antiquity, rose toward its climax through the history of the people of Israel. It finds its consummation in the appearance of Jesus Christ upon this earth and the subsequent descent of His promised Holy Spirit within His Church; that Church which He Himself placed as His representative throughout the world, and, from His day onward, throughout all human history.

Since, therefore, the dogmatic statements of the Creeds convey a knowledge of God which comes out of an age-long experience,³³ they must not be taken for what they do not pretend to

³¹ John 16:13.

³² Acts 17:27.

³³ The simple historical statements such as, for example, "He was crucified under Pontius Pilate," being straightforward records of specific and verifiable events, are in a different category from the dogmatic creedal statements. They need no explanatory comment here.

be. They do not offer extended explanations or apologetic discussions of the truths which they convey. The Dogma of the Blessed Trinity, for example, as expressed in the Creeds, does not pretend to give us some sort of intellectual "definition" or description of God. Such a pretense, even if the Creeds contained expanded philosophical treatises, would be ludicrous and, indeed, well-nigh blasphemous. God's Nature and Being cannot, in fact, be presented in words at all, much less in a phrase. But what the Creeds do try to assure is that none of man's essential knowledge of God, gained in all these long and varied phases of human experience which we have been reviewing, and none of God's own Self-revelations to man, shall be lost; and they try to assure this in as precise, compact and accurate a way as possible. The early Church would have us the inheritors of her riches in the knowledge of God. We ourselves should not have to, and we do not have to begin all over again, starting, as it were, from nothing, afresh in every generation, upon our own particular religious quest. The very purpose of the Catholic Church in the world is not only to make this unnecessary, but, indeed, authoritatively to prevent us from undertaking any such impossible and mistaken task. And to serve this purpose, the Catholic Creeds are among the chiefest instruments which the Church provides for succeeding generations, under the sure guidance of the Holy Spirit of God.

II

THE CREEDS AS INSTRUMENTS OF EXPERIENCE

THE Dogmas of the Creeds, summing up as they do the knowledge of God which has emerged as a progressive Divine Self-revelation, unveiled in long human historical experience, are very far from expressing mere philosophical speculations on the part of a relatively few erudite theologians of olden times. Since, on the contrary, as we have now seen, they arise out of experience, they must be reappropriated into experience by every succeeding generation of men, in order to be understood; in order that, in any proper sense of the word, they may be believed. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine," says Our Lord, "whether it be of God."¹ That experience, for example, whereby the Dogma of the Blessed Trinity is known and believed, must therefore of necessity embrace all life, and include practical, intellectual and specifically religious activities. Significantly enough, the so-called Athanasian Symbol, the *Quicumque Vult*, as it appears in its translation in the English Prayer Book, says "The Catholic Faith is this, that"—not that we "assent," not even that we "believe" that God is so-and-so or such-and-such—but rather: "The Catholic Faith is this, that we *worship* one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity." Not, then, that we first give intellectual assent to something, or that we understand something which is now accurately and clearly explained to us; but first we act, we come into worshipping relationship with Someone whom the Dogma of the Blessed Trinity sets forth to us. It is in this action that God is known. To know God, we do something in His Presence which concerns Him as He is. This is the Catholic Faith.

Thus the Catholic Creeds have their genesis, take their forms, and bear their fruits in the lives of men, not after the manner of nude, philosophical propositions and still less after the fashion of scientific formulae, even though the Creeds do actually

¹ John 7:17.

record both philosophical truths and those relevant historical facts upon which these truths are based. On the contrary, although of course they cannot be entirely and adequately so classified, the Creeds are rather to be placed in categories analogous to those of the greatest works of art. From this it follows that although, strictly speaking, they may not themselves be labelled as mere works of art, their nature and their use may none the less be greatly illuminated by a consideration of the role that both artistic creation and aesthetic appreciation play in human experience.

Furthermore, since this analogy between the use and understanding of the Creeds and the use and understanding of works of art, is interestingly close as well as extensive, a somewhat detailed examination of certain apposite principles of aesthetics will reward us, before we proceed to a further consideration of the principles of the Faith.

A great work of art has its beginning in an interior experience on the part of a great artist. Such an experience must arise and come into being out of an inner vision of truth, a kind of prophetic insight into the hidden realities of this world of men and of things, and an unveiling of the relationships in which the values of this world stand to the world of eternal values. This vision may be wide and far-reaching in its scope, seeming almost to sweep the horizon of Universal Being, or it may be relatively very limited and specific, concentrating its attention upon but a small area of Reality. But the vision which is the foundation of any great work of art, whether broad and embracing much or whether narrowly focused and intensive, is always profound, piercing through the surfaces of things into their very substances; and such a vision is therefore both beautiful and glorious, because within it are in some measure disclosed the foundations of Reality, their balanced proportions, their simple harmonies, together with their efficient actualities.

When he has once beheld such a vision, an artist has as his next and immediate problem that of recording it in such a way that it may be conveyed as adequately as possible to other men and women. An artist's own original insight which lies at the

foundation of any particular work of art must always be an exceedingly private thing. It has, as yet, no sensible existence apart from his own inner experience, and he cannot, therefore, in any conceivable manner, invite other people to share directly in this experience by the simple expedient of asking them to "come and see it for themselves." In any case it would be a misleading over-simplification to imply that an artist does always actually have what might be called a "finished" or complete experience of some part of Reality, before he so much as begins to try to convey this experience to others by means of some artistic form. At the outset, the artist's own private vision may be only more or less final, more or less complete, relative to a particular truth. During the later process of recording that vision under sensible forms, the original insight is almost bound to grow in content, as well as to mature in clarity. In the case of many an artist, a completed work of art often contains much that its creator would scarcely have dared to predict in advance.

The formal expression of any artistic concept can never actually reproduce it. It may do no more than strive to convey it to others. For this reason, all completed works of art must seem to their makers in some sense inadequate. The only completely adequate manner of conveying an artist's original experience would be to bring others directly into its presence, a procedure which, as has just been said, is manifestly impossible. On the other hand, precisely because during the process of expression that original inner experience necessarily grows and enlarges, there is, in the making of all great art, a definite gain, which sometimes more than offsets that dissatisfaction and sense of loss which every artist feels when he compares his finished art form with that inward experience of his own, which the form is intended to externalize. For this reason it happens that many an artist has viewed his own completed work with a certain amazement, a fact which shows that insights into the beauties and harmonies of Reality are sometimes greatly amplified and deepened during the course of their external expression. Thus, Richard Wagner is said to have expressed himself as utterly unable to understand how he could have written anything so beautiful as the *Liebtestod* in his opera *Tristan and Isolde*.

We have said that the problem of any artist is to "convey" his own private aesthetic experiences, under certain chosen art forms, to other people, so that his own unique experience of Truth may be shared as adequately as possible with a wide audience. However, the word "convey" in this connection is both inadequate and misleading. A private and unique personal experience cannot be literally "conveyed" as a whole to others. It cannot even be more or less adequately reproduced, if the latter word implies the achieving of an identity between the experience of an artist and that of his public. For one thing, into the artist's original experience there must always enter a wealth of personal emotion, of psychological attitudes and affections, in short, all those elements which enter into the individual personality of the artist in question; and which, rooted as these must be in all the remembered and unremembered incidents, episodes and relationships of his own private history, can never be the mutual or common property of any other human being, in any time or place. Such elements of personal experience which necessarily largely enter into an artist's insights into Reality, can never be "conveyed" to any one else. It is more accurate to say, therefore, that the problem of every artist is not so much to "convey" his own experience under the forms of art, as it is to re-create in the personal experience of the members of his public, inner visions, balanced and organized aesthetic patterns which will not reproduce his own original experience, for that would be quite impossible, but which, instead, will correspond to this experience in a certain more or less adequate and satisfactory manner. The aim of an artist, in every final artistic expression of his own experiences, is to summon forth, or conjure up, in the inner experiences of those who come into the presence of his art forms, a fresh sense of those particular beautiful relationships, existing in Reality, such that it may correspond to that original sense of those same relationships which he himself has had.

When, however, it is said that an artist seeks to summon forth or conjure up in the persons of his public, experiences or visions of deep Reality which will correspond to his own, we must again qualify that statement also, by noting at least one

important additional characteristic of this process. An artist, through the medium of his art form, can never play upon or manipulate the inner psychological experiences of his public, as if he were manipulating or playing upon perfectly inert, passive materials. The artist, working with the medium of his art, gaining entrance into the interior personalities of his public through the gateways of one or more of their special sense organs, is able to summon forth patterns of organized responses which he may hope and expect to have correspond to his own particular and primary aesthetic experience. However, no such human responses are ever merely passive, in the sense that they can be thought of as mechanically called into being by a cause or stimulus impinging from the outside alone. On the contrary, the responses of individual people to a work of art always contain important elements which are both free and voluntary, and which have their origin within those people themselves. The building up, within any given person in the presence of a work of art, of an aesthetic experience which will in some way correspond to the original experience which gave birth to that art form, is not a mere "summoning forth" of such a corresponding experience, but is, in addition to that, a true act of creation in its own right on the part of the experiencing person in question.

The problem of an artist is therefore twofold. He must find a medium which is suitable for the external expression of his own primary experience, this medium being one in the manipulation of which he himself can acquire at least an adequate skill. He must then embody, within this medium of expression, forms so arrayed that they will present, to the members of an anticipated public, materials upon which their own creative powers can, in turn, work. The art form must thus contain within itself certain materials which can be appropriated into the aesthetic consciousness of those who experience it. And it must contain these in such quality, and in such arrangements, that the public will not only be guided into the building up of an interior experience which corresponds to the original artistic intention, but will also find in the particular art form a framework or scaffolding into which new psychological elements peculiar to each individual may be fitted. Regarding the quality

and use of these new elements in this connection, the artist himself can have little or no advance knowledge. Much less does he have any certain or absolute control over the process whereby new individuals reappropriate his work of art into the fabric of their own private aesthetic experience.

When one speaks of a "work of art," one thinks immediately of the external sensible expression of that work, whether this be painting, or literature, or sculpture, or music, or drama, or the dance. As a matter of fact, it would be more illuminating, against the background of the foregoing considerations, to think of a work of art as a single whole, or as a finished and completed thing in itself, only after it has evolved or passed through a threefold process. A completed work of art begins in the aesthetic experience of Reality on the part of an artist; it is externalized in a formal expression of one kind or another; and last, but not by any means least, it is reappropriated into the fresh and re-created experiences of individuals who compose the artist's public.

In the case of a musical composition, for example a composition for an orchestra, a fourth stage in this process seems, at first sight, to be introduced by the performing orchestra itself. The composer has externalized his own experience in written notes, but this externalized form needs to be further conveyed to an audience by performance upon musical instruments, by other musicians, under the direction of a leader. In this case, however, it can be argued that the orchestra, together with the audience, form simply one corporate and cooperative unit which for purposes of convenience, or even of necessity, is divided into two sections, with a kind of division of functions. They work together in what is, nevertheless, essentially our third stage in the completion of the work of art, namely, its creative reappropriation into other human aesthetic consciousnesses. To understand this, it is only necessary to realize that sometimes there is present no non-performing audience whatever, and that the orchestra itself, in that case, can make up its own audience. Chamber music with informal groups of players is often performed under such conditions. Or, at the other extreme, if an audience were made up entirely of experienced

and highly skilled artist-musicians, it might be sufficient for their aesthetic apprehension or, better, appropriation of the composer's original intention, to dispense entirely with an orchestra and to have his manuscript notes and markings projected before their eyes, page by page upon a screen. Thus, the interpretation of a symphonic musical composition by a stringed orchestra varies greatly in degree, but not actually in kind, from that added ease and richness which might be given to the reappropriation of a poet's vision by some group of people, if the corresponding poem were being read aloud to them, thus giving them the added benefit of sound and rhythm for their imaginations' use; or to the fuller experience of some great picture by a group of people viewing it, while its subtleties were being elucidated by an experienced art critic. The chief difference between the last two cases and the orchestral interpretation of music, lies in the fact that most sensitively educated people not only can, but they are expected, by artists, to re-create intended aesthetic experiences directly from poems or pictures, without any secondary intermediary presentation or interpretation. On the other hand, a secondary intermediary in the conveying of an aesthetic experience under forms of music—in the illustration this intermediary would be the orchestra and its conductor—is not only expected, but definitely planned by the composer himself.

It may sometimes happen that a composer may feel that he must personally be the conductor of an orchestra if his composition is to bear the requisite fruit in the experience of an audience. This may indicate that the composer is mistakenly desirous of *reproducing* his private original experience in the consciousness of his audience, and he feels that only he can successfully assist in this. If this is so, he is mistaken for two reasons. First, it is not desirable that he should attempt such a thing, and second, it is quite impossible in any event, and the attempt to do so must end in at least partial frustration. Or again, the composer may feel that he has not been entirely able to find an abiding form or permanent medium in which he can fully embody his original experience, but that whenever this experience is to be formally externalized for its appropriation

by others, the artist himself must always be present at the event, adding something of himself by word or gesture or other direction. If an artist feels this necessity he abandons, in effect, his single role of creator, and identifies himself, at least in part, with his audience, uniting himself with them, in the role of re-creator, in the third stage of the aesthetic process, which is actually appropriate only to audiences. This is but to acknowledge a certain defect in the whole process, because an aesthetic experience which cannot be adequately enshrined in a permanent medium for use by an audience without the assisting presence of its creator in that same audience, has something of the evanescence of the art of medieval Minnesingers and Troubadours. But, in the case of music, great aesthetic experience, greatly externalized in notes for an appropriate medium of performance, is not only not diminished, but often enhanced and even fulfilled, if assisted by the intermediary interpreting artistry of a conductor who is not the composer himself. In any event, in all the cases here suggested, conductors, readers, interpreters, are, from the point of view of the original artist, all component parts, even if sometimes highly specialized parts, of his public. And this public acts both cooperatively and creatively to re-create for itself an experience which will not, to be sure, reproduce that experience which the artist has attempted to make available to the senses of others under his externalized art form, but which will, instead, adequately correspond to it.

Thus, however varied may be the details of the process whereby an aesthetic experience is made available by an artist to his future public, the chief stages in this process remain but three. There comes, first, the artist's original private experience or vision of Reality, second, his work of externalizing this under a recognizable art form, and third, the fresh creation of an interior experience corresponding to that of the artist, by an individual, or by individuals, brought, in some appropriate manner, into the presence of the art form in question. The second stage, that of externalization of the work of art, its "transit stage," as it might be called, between the original creative experience of the artist and the final reappropriation of that experience in a corresponding experience of some public, may

involve secondary cooperating intermediaries, such as orchestras, conductors, pianists or art critics. Also, in this second stage, the original artist may himself further cooperate, partly as originator of the work of art, and partly even, as identifying himself cooperatively with the re-creative work of his own public. Also, as has been said, the first stage itself can never be either completely prior or completely disentangled from the second stage. All these factors, and others which may occur to anyone considering the matter, tend to blur the boundary lines between the successive stages in the development of a work of art, as it moves from its origin with an artistic person to its final end with the persons of a public. Nevertheless, in broad outline these three stages of growth in the case of every work of art are always not only discernible, but also, after analytical consideration, separable, at least in thought, each one from the other.

That inner aesthetic experience in which a work of art has its genesis is made up of a vast array of psychological materials. In the artist's person, abstract intellectual concepts and vague or unattached psychological affections, emotional attitudes and potentialities, some of them profound, some like surface ripples on this depth, are mingled with and distributed among a myriad remembered concrete incidents and episodes of past experience, both individual and social, and with another multitude of fresh impressions which, even as he works, flow through the organs of the artist's senses, out of his immediate environment into his mind and heart. From among all these available materials, an artist seeks to make definite selection of those elements which are seen by him to be appropriate to his present intended use, marshalling and organizing these into an harmonious, self-consistent and self-subsisting organic pattern, under the direction of his consciously exercised, overruling creative imagination.

Over against the artist stands the artist's public. This public is composed of people who, in their own right, also have an equipment of psychological materials, intellectual and affective, which more or less adequately answers to the artist's own personal equipment. The chief difference which distinguishes the persons of the public from the artist himself is that the

former, in general, lack the artist's insights both into the potential mutual relationships of these materials, and into their organic relationships to the deep and rich Reality which underlies them. They also lack the artist's creative ability to make, on his own initiative, discriminating selection among his inner materials, to manipulate them into harmonious, balanced, and duly proportioned patterns. However, the persons composing any audience, of which it can be said that it is functioning co-operatively with the artist's intentions, do also have a certain analogous ordering or creative capacity of their own. Otherwise, the work of art, into whose presence they come, would be practically meaningless to them. Although the people of an audience may lack the ability to summon up, without external aid and solely on their own initiative, out of the materials of their inner psychological equipment, such an original and new arrangement of these materials as might constitute the foundation of an original work of art, they are able—indeed they must be able—to achieve some sort of adequate fresh and new arrangement whenever they are brought into the presence of the artist's sensible externalization of his own original aesthetic experience, that is, when they come into the presence of what is usually called a "work of art."

This work of art may be a musical composition, a painting, an acted drama, a piece of sculpture, or a succession of printed pages. Whatever the aesthetic vehicle may be, it must serve the people of the public in three different ways. First, it must always supply certain new materials for their interior experience, both intellectual and affective. Second, it must stimulate their inner creative imaginations, so that each person achieves to some extent a new harmonious experience, a new structure of intellectual and emotional values, which will now contain certain more or less numerous elements supplied by the immediate experience of the work of art itself, blended among which will be found other elements already present and potentially available in their own individual psychological equipments. Third, a work of art must act as a guide in this latter process, so that the new aesthetic achievements of the members of an audience may in fact, for all their individual peculiarities, and for all

the individual inner wealth of added materials—sometimes very great—which every member may bring to this kind of appreciative creative work, correspond in some fairly definite and, in large outline, predictable manner to the creative work of the original artist. Thus, in the third process, along with the fresh creative work done by the persons of the artist's audience, the artist himself, through his art form, always gives something of himself to that audience. Perhaps the greater the artist, the greater will be the extent both of the content and of the pattern of his public's fresh experiences, which, through his art form, he himself will supply.

And so, while it may be that no member of a given audience could possibly supply the original ground for the experience which lies at the foundation of, let us say, a great concerto for the piano, or a great painting, nevertheless many even obscure such members may well be able to re-create an adequate corresponding experience for themselves, if, in the given work of art, the artist has succeeded in externalizing a sensible expression of his experience which will perform the foregoing three-fold service. That is, the art form will enhance an audience's store of aesthetic materials, will stimulate its members both in the use of these materials and in the further use of their own inner aesthetic store, and, in addition, will positively and definitely guide them, in this fresh creative work, into paths which correspond to the artist's own original intention.

Since the work of appreciation of a work of art is a truly creative activity, although a secondary and contingent one, dependent always upon the prior work of another originative, creative artist, it is unfortunate that we have no customary words to describe the function of the members of an audience while they are in process of appropriating a work of art into their own experience, except words which seem to imply a merely passive receptiveness. No artistic public is ever merely passively receptive, but must always be creatively responsive. Therefore, if an artist may be described as the creator of a work of art, it might not be inappropriate to describe the appreciator of it as a "counter-creator," the active appropriator of a created work.

As we have just said, the interior psychological materials, which a creative artist has at his disposal, fall into two categories, the intellectual and the affective. These two groups of materials are, in their turns, respectively divisible into two parts each. Intellectual materials can be classified as either concrete or as abstract. This means that an artist has at his disposal a wealth of remembered incidents and episodes, and a great store of more or less clearly pictured scenes and mental images gathered not only from personal experience, but from reading, and through contacts with the experience and knowledge of other people. These are the concrete elements of his intellectual equipment. He also possesses much abstract knowledge. He may, for example, hold certain philosophical principles as providing a true intellectual insight into that Reality of which his concrete experience gives him a superficial view; or he may understand many an abstract scientific law which enables him to analyse or to classify the diversified content of that experience.

An artist's affective psychological equipment may also be divided into two groups of affections, which correspond respectively, if roughly, to his concrete and abstract intellectual equipment. His affections, by which is meant his emotional biases or tendencies, may be described as, in general, either linked or attached, or unattached and floating, that is, unattached as far as the content of his conscious rational intellect is concerned. His attached affections will be such things as, for example, a sense of sympathetic happiness linked to the remembrance of a particular engaged young man and woman; or attached, perhaps, rather to the idea of young lovers in general. Again, an attached psychological affection would be a sense of wonder or fear connected with the memory of thunderstorms and winds, or of a forest fire; or possibly linked with a certain piece of literature such as, for instance, a passage from the Book of Job. A sense of mystical awe might be attached to a certain remembered sunset over the ocean, or linked with the sight of a mountain peak rising from the mists of a summer dawn. On a less exalted level, the sense of the "homey," the cozy and the comfortable, might be attached to a mental picture of a

little girl cuddled against a large dog in front of an open fire.

Unattached psychological affections are sometimes described as "mere feelings." As a matter of fact, such affections or emotional tensions are often very well defined, very intense and very deep, and yet they may be almost devoid of any concrete intellectual content, and may be still less linked or attached to particular remembered scenes or to mental pictures or concepts. One may feel depressed, happy, exalted, playful, or sobered with a sense of awe, suddenly deeply conscious of the mystery or the dread Power behind the universe in general. Such unattached psychological affective states are potentially present to some extent in every one. They are, to some extent, at every one's command; but we may suppose that a great artist has a particularly varied and rich interior store of them, as well as a developed ability to summon them to his aesthetic use, as he builds the structures of his created art. In passing, it should be said that this does not mean that an artist while engaged in his work necessarily feels strongly, or becomes emotionalized. However, he understands those affections which he wishes to evoke, and he can deliberately set about evoking them, although, it may be, without at some particular moment entering emotionally into those feelings himself. The point is, that an artist has command of an affective equipment which he can sometimes summon to his purpose by acts of will, and which on other occasions, as if motivated from a source over which he has but little voluntary control, wells up within him and, out of its own storehouse, seems to weave patterns ready-made for him, which the conscious artist has but to seize upon and use.

The most obvious of those materials of which an artist may avail himself, are the common, well-defined emotions which are strongly linked with equally common and definite mental pictures. Such simple and uncomplicated aesthetic materials are, as a rule, the property of every ordinary man and woman, and in such cases, the threefold process of a work of art is exceedingly simple and straightforward. We may consider, for example, the idea of human mother love, the emotional appeal of a charming but helpless infant held in its mother's arms, surrounded and protected by natural maternal affection. If this

idea be held only in its most uncomplicated, its most familiar and obvious form, it will be free from the intrusion of more complicated ideas and profounder emotions, which, in a cultivated and thoughtful mind would almost inevitably arise. Let us for the moment exclude these deeper things. Let us leave aside, for example, thoughts about the mystery of new life issuing from other life now beginning to age and to pass; thoughts about birth and inevitable death; about the contrast between fresh innocence and tired experience, between young hope and older disillusion. All these musings, and many more, might cluster around the mental picture of a mother and child. But let us, for the moment, suppose that this concept appears in the mind of an artist in its most jejune form. The problem of externalizing such an interior experience will be correspondingly simple, uncomplicated, and indeed, rather commonplace. It will consist in painting a rather photographic representation of the subject with "pretty"—in the vulgar sense—lines and colors, and with the usual smiles and gestures which, in this connection, are commonly recognized as corresponding to tenderness and love. It is clear that in this case the artist has done very little work which can be truly called originaive or creative. He has drawn upon his own store of aesthetic materials scarcely at all. There has been no summoning up of allied and deep affective materials which might have been brought to the enrichment of his central theme; there has been no rearranging or reconstructing of such inner materials out of old contexts and associated linkings, into the new contexts of a freshly constructed aesthetic pattern. The artist has been content to contemplate a scene which, with its obvious immediate linked affections, has come to him, as it might come to anyone else, complete and ready-made from his environment; and he has been content to externalize this in the form of photograph-like reproduction. Indeed, such a simple externalization is the only thing required in this case, because the aesthetic construct has suffered no appreciable change or addition since the moment it was received by the artist from his environment.

In a correspondingly simple and effortless manner, the members of the artist's public reappropriate his picture, the ex-

ternal symbol of his original experience, into their own experiences. Here again, the picture finds a ready-made and corresponding set of remembrances, mental pictures and commonly held associations, all of them pre-existent and already organized patterns, within the person of almost any one who happens to see it. Such patterns are merely summoned forth by the picture, again with little or no interior effort on the part of the beholders. There is, on their part, no more rearranging of materials, no putting of older linked or unlinked affections into new contexts, than there was, at the earlier point, on the part of the artist himself. In short, the artist and his picture have succeeded in creating and conveying nothing more, and perhaps even less, than would have been summoned up within the persons of the public, had these people themselves come directly into the presence of the mother and child who sat as the artist's models. The artist and his picture not only have not contributed anything to the fullness of such a possible experience, but they may on the contrary actually be in the way, standing as a veiling intermediary between the natural objects and people who would otherwise have gained more by viewing these things for themselves. It is for these reasons that photographic representation in painting, or, to take another and different example, slavish imitation of natural sounds with musical instruments, indicate, as a rule, a paucity of creative talent or, at any rate, of effort, on the part of an artist; and the art forms which include such things are held aesthetically in low esteem. However, by the same token, such art is often found to have a wide appeal, precisely because its appropriation is so effortless, and because it requires little, if any, painful rearrangement of the inner mental concepts and psychologically linked affections of the average untrained man and woman. In other words, a minimum of what we have called counter-creation is demanded, or even suggested by it.

Let us suppose, however, a very different situation. Let us suppose that the artist who paints a picture of a mother and child is, at the same time, contemplating within himself the mystery of evil and pain found in the world of men; that he is thinking of God and His relationship to all creation; that he is

musings upon the eternal yearning love of God toward men who seek Him and find Him not, because of human blindness and sin; that he contemplates the Christian story of God's redemption of the world through the Incarnation of the eternal Logos, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; that, as he looks upon the simple human mother and child who serve as models before him, his inner vision is that of the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and of her Son, the Son of God made flesh.

This inward vision, in all the fullness of its glory, in all the richness of its elaborated beauty, the artist will seek to externalize. Yet even for this august purpose, he may still avail himself of the same means which were used in the former example. The artist may now paint a picture of a mother and her child. Clearly, however, in this latter case, the mere pictorial reproduction of the human models will be a relatively minor consideration. On the contrary, the painted picture, although it contains the mother and child, becomes chiefly a kind of aesthetic code, an efficient symbol, not reproducing, but rather expressing, as adequately as may be, the artist's vision; a symbol upon which men and women of the artist's generation and of all succeeding generations may gaze, and, by a process of counter-creation, realize within themselves experiences and visions analogous or corresponding to that vision out of which the picture first arose.

In one sense, then, a great picture of this kind, for example, the so-called Sistine Madonna of Raphael, can be said to have been finished when it left the hand of its maker. In another, and profounder sense, no great picture is ever "finished," or, again, no great musical symphony is ever "completed," as long as new generations of men and women come into their presences. They are forever being enriched, they are forever gaining in fresh content, as, during passing centuries the work of new aesthetic counter-creation goes on. Much of the fruit of this counter-creative work on the part of the public is actually treasured for us in the literature of aesthetic appreciation. It may not be whimsical to believe that something of the stored riches of age-long human counter-creative experience may be

felt directly by sensitive people when they come into the presence of a great picture of the Renaissance, or of a statue of the Gothic age.

The mediums of aesthetic expression, the physical forms which can be made to serve as sensible expressions of an artist's vision, are many and widely varied. Nearly all of these forms, however, possess one peculiar limitation in common, if we consider painting, sculpture, poetry and the rest, as the means of passage of an aesthetic construct from within the consciousness of an artist to its counter-created construct, within the consciousness of the artist's public. It has already been hinted that the greatest art has for its central and deepest content chiefly abstract ideas, philosophical or religious, and unlinked psychological affections. Let us suppose that certain of such unattached emotional tensions have been organized and re-ordered into fresh and lovely relationships within the consciousness of some artist, in a way which expresses a new and deep insight into Reality. The forms or symbols which must now be adopted for the externalization of such an original aesthetic construct, must, however, nearly always be forms taken from the physical world. They are, therefore, symbols familiar to ordinary men and women. In a general or vulgar context, the actual forms used for the greatest works of art necessarily possess a goodly number of common and, for most people, very strongly linked ideas and affections associated with them. Now it will be precisely these commonly held associations which will be the first ones to be summoned up in the consciousness of any public which is aesthetically inexperienced or uneducated. Even a Raphael, in painting a Madonna with the Christ Child, has, at the same time, to paint a simple mother holding her infant son. Or, as another example, a Turner sensing as he looks upon a setting sun the still deep beauty and the serene harmonies at the heart of the natural world, must still externalize his deeper vision under a form which contains at least something of the form of an actual sunset, and this again is a natural phenomenon, the superficial appearance of which is familiar to everyone. Also, almost everyone has some common linked affections connected with the sight of a mother and child or of sunsets in general,

which, unfortunately, may not be at all the particular materials with which a Raphael or a Turner intended primarily to work. And, in many cases, such linked associations with common things may actually interpose themselves as barriers between a public aesthetically inexperienced, and those deeper ideas and affections which the artist would have wished to call up and organize for the purpose of a new aesthetic experience.

It is clear, therefore, that an aesthetically uneducated and inexperienced public will, as a rule, tend first of all to look for the photographic in even the greatest art; for it is only for response to the photographic that it possesses a sufficient interior intellectual and affective equipment. In so far as the art of a Raphael or a Turner departs from the merely photographic, as it always does to a great degree, such a public will find in these departures only a disturbing inaccuracy, because the additional means which the artists have used to express their deeper insights are precisely these deviations. An inexperienced public is, as a rule, not only untrained in the meaning of such aesthetic symbolism as these deviations represent, but it is also apt to lack a deeper interior equipment or store of its own upon which to draw, even if it were minded to do some counter-creative work extending beyond and below the obvious and vulgar aesthetic structures which are linked to the photographic.

On the other hand, an artist himself tends to use natural forms, in so far as he reproduces them at all in his art form, in such a way that they serve a function analogous to the field, or carrier waves, in wireless transmission. These waves, like natural forms in artistic expression, are always present during every radio broadcast. However, in wireless receiving, the less noise the field waves make the better the reception is. In fact, in perfect radio receiving, the "field," though present, is silent. The sound effects come entirely from certain irregular, or "overtone" waves which are superimposed upon the field waves. In other words, it is the deviations from the field or carrier waves, which provide all our pleasure in listening to a concert over the radio. Of the carrier waves themselves, we should be able to hear nothing at all. An aesthetically untrained public might be likened, in the extreme case, to some-

one who demanded to hear only a monotone from the field waves, and who found the superimposed short and irregular waves, conveying other and more subtle, modulated sounds, not only not pleasurable, but actually disturbing.

For the full appreciation of any great art, aesthetic training is essential. Such training implies growth both in aesthetic knowledge and in experience. That an individual member of the artistic public may be able adequately to fulfill his function as a counter-creative agent, he must, first of all, increase his own interior store of aesthetic materials. To such store, no knowledge, no deep thought, no philosophic and religious insights, no received traditions nor treasured personal experiences and relationships, can be alien. The greater the store a man possesses of intellectual concepts and of potential psychological affections, the better will be his aesthetic equipment. In general, also, the greater his store of unlinked affections, the better will be his counter-creative power.

But aesthetic experience will bring to everyone an added quality. Not only will he become more practised and more adept in responding to artistic symbolism and art forms, with counter-created interior constructs of his own, but he will also become more amenable to the external art form, more pliant, as it were, in the presence of the artistic symbol. He will be the more willing that an artist should, through the medium of his symbol, cause some entirely new experience to emerge in his consciousness. This latter quality of pliancy may be one of the most difficult dispositions to acquire. It implies a kind of aesthetic open-mindedness which is far from common. The usual man nearly always has at least a few rudimentary aesthetic patterns entrenched, as it were, within him, which, as we have said, are apt to be strongly linked to natural objects or situations. Instinctively, such a person tends to resent an interference with these personal aesthetic possessions. All of us, at times, may find it somewhat painful to be stirred to our very depths by a great work of art, because it is precisely here that the artist is succeeding in seizing upon our ideas and our affections and in leading us to arrange them into new combinations along the lines of his own intention. To one unused to

this, such a "messing about" with his already formed emotional and intellectual patterns seems strange, unpleasant and perhaps, slightly indecent. Yet it is precisely this pliant willingness to permit one's personal psychological materials to be newly stimulated and acted upon by an artist, together with a parallel increased ability to do a corresponding responsive and original counter-creative work oneself, which form the twinned interior training necessary for aesthetic appreciation.

Finally, a certain technical training on the part of an appreciating public is required, in the use and meaning of the habitual forms adopted as symbols in "works of art," and in the manner in which these are customarily employed by any given artist to convey his own inner experiences. Familiarity must be acquired with such matters as the use, by particular artists or artistic schools, of light and shadow, or line and form, as, for example, conveying joy and gaiety, or obscurity and mystery, or terror and awe. It is an old controversy as to whether there is something universal or eternal, that is, some element of an absolute quality, discoverable in lines or colors or in light and shadow, or, for that matter, in words or notes which are used in works of art. It appears, to certain critics, that for the symbolic expression of similar, inner aesthetic constructs, analogous or very closely allied symbols have always been used by all artists of all cultures and in every age. By the same token, these fundamental techniques of conveying an aesthetic idea are thought to be recognizable instinctively by any sensitive member of a public, as appropriate to that which they convey. However, whether this be so or not, some training, at least, is always necessary for the interpretation of all works of art, because an actual art object, whether it be painting, poetry, music or any other, does serve, in the last analysis, as a kind of code by means of which a transit of an experience takes place from one artistic consciousness to another. Therefore, this code must not only be understood, but also be mutually agreed upon by the two parties to the process, by him who creatively originates and by him who counter-creatively receives.

If only for the sake of completeness, one more word should here be added concerning those symbolic codes which, as has

just been said, all works of art in some sense are. Practically all the art forms available to artists for the sensible expressions of their art possess for the average person definitely linked affections and ideas. Music alone seems to be the art form which may be unencumbered by this limitation. A woven pattern of musical sounds may be the medium of calling up within an audience an inner psychological state of mind and spirit, a newly woven pattern of unlinked psychological affections, which may be practically unalloyed by any material or other fixed associations. It would seem, then, that from this point of view music might be called the highest form of artistic expression. It is a kind of mathematics of art, devoid of concrete content, occasioning within its audience, according to the intention of a composer, a new and beautiful state of being, and nothing else. Only in so-called "programme music" does this highest of the arts abdicate her special and unique privilege. She then deliberately adopts, by imitation, something which, in other arts, might well be looked upon as an unavoidable limitation, rather than as an asset. "Programme music" adopts imitative sounds and combinations of notes. It thus deliberately chooses to work with common linked emotions and concrete intellectual concepts. Precisely for this reason, such music is usually looked upon as a relatively low form of that art.

Of recent years, many experimental attempts have been made to use other art forms and symbols in the way that music, at its highest, uses her own special sound symbols. Experiments of this sort necessitate a rejection or a disregard of the almost necessary and elementary linkages which most art symbols and codes, other than pure musical tones, have for the average man. Thus a writer like Gertrude Stein would appear to wish to use words as if they were musical sounds, almost, if not quite, devoid of all intellectual content, or as if they could be completely removed from their customary linked affections. An older poet could write of bird song that "oft-times hath charm'd magic casements opening on the foam of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn,"² externalizing in these lines a lovely pattern of many emotional tensions and affections which are certainly

² Keats, *Ode to a Nightingale*.

not to be found in the nude senses and sounds of the words alone. Indeed, considered merely as an intellectual statement, the words do not altogether make "sense," although the lines serve as an admirable basis for counter-creation within the consciousness of almost any reader. Nevertheless, the words do retain something, at least, of their accustomed linked content. "Foam" and "casements" and "seas" and "lands" are not devoid of specific, concrete ideas or concepts. Those "carrier" symbols, which we likened to the field waves of radio broadcasting, are still to some extent in evidence. Furthermore, since words were devised precisely in order to convey definite linked ideas, concrete intellectual concepts, as well-defined and peculiar to each separate word as the development of language has made possible, it is, to say the least, open to doubt whether they can ever successfully be completely detached from their usual content, and, after the fashion of musical notes, be made to serve as completely unlinked symbols in their own right. The same argument would apply to the use of forms in painting and sculpture, where the "Abstractionists" and others have made an analogous experiment with their peculiar mediums. It remains to be seen whether any of these experiments, which seem to be attempting to use other art forms in the manner in which music alone has heretofore appeared successful, can achieve their ends or not. One fact, however, is clear. The work of counter-creation on the part of the public, in the presence of such "advanced" art, will always require an exceptional amount of training in the strange and obscure artistic codes which are now adopted by these later artists. It would furthermore seem that artists who attempt to use accustomed aesthetic code mediums in abstract and hitherto unaccustomed ways owe it to any public which is trying to cooperate with them to be exceedingly consistent in their new usages. They should seek a certain consistency not only among themselves, but also, as individuals, with themselves, from day to day. Otherwise the task of counter-creation on the part of an aesthetic public becomes impossibly great, and the utmost confusion may result.

In the light of the foregoing discussion we may return to a

consideration of the Catholic Creeds. The primary vision, the integrated conception of the Catholic Faith, as a single, all-embracing and self-consistent view of that deep Reality which lies at the root of man's nature, of his beginning, and his final destiny, of the Nature of God, of His purpose for His creation, together with man's relationship to God within that creation, arises out of man's reasoned thought concerning his own historical experience, and out of God's Self-revelation within that experience. As we have already seen, at least in large outline, this vision of the Faith with all its full and harmonious content of rational, intellectual understanding, of revealed truth and of emotional dynamic, takes form, with the passage of the ages, in the highest corporate religious consciousness of the human race. It takes form in a manner analogous to that in which an original and creative aesthetic vision takes form within the consciousness of a single great artist. It has also been indicated that the foundations of this vision of the Faith are laid in the universal history of mankind, and that to these foundations all races and nations have, in some degree, contributed. The vision has been enriched, sharpened, and clarified in the historical religious experience of one nation, that of the specially chosen Hebrew People. It has been brought to its completion in the revelation of Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary and the Son of God. This vision has been fulfilled finally in the foundation of the Catholic Church as the organ of God's redemption of the world, and in the covenanted bestowal of the Holy Spirit upon that Church.

A certain more or less adequate expression of this vision is to be found, by those who seek it, in all the great religious and philosophical writings of the ages, and in every artistic creation in which men have sought to convey something of this religious knowledge, under sensible outward forms of whatever kind. Sometimes, one might say always, any individual such expression, considered by itself, is fragmentary and inadequate. Sometimes it may be hopelessly inadequate, veiling the truth rather than setting it forth. Sometimes, on the other hand, as in the writings of such men as Plato and Aristotle, to mention only these, a larger success is attained, and a vision of Reality is set

forth which can never fail both to delight and to stimulate all future generations. But, in a more particular and special sense, the Church, who in the development of her own religious vision of Reality may be likened to a creative artist, possesses also her own technical experts. These scholarly and often saintly experts are competent, at her behest, and with her sanction, to express her own completer vision under forms of words, so that this vision may be made available to all other people throughout the world and throughout all history. It is to these technical, scholarly experts that the Church has entrusted the symbolic expression of her own knowledge of God, and of His relationship to the world of His creation. Such are the theologians and philosophers of the Catholic Church. From their hands have issued the Catholic Creeds as formal, symbolic externalizations of her Faith.

These Creeds are exceedingly compact, elliptical and concise. They are neither diffuse, nor are they enriched by minor details. They contain no arguments, proofs nor apologetic. They are not the writings of Prophets, they are not the Gospels, nor are they Scripture literature. They are not the extended personal writings of either the theologians or the philosophers who helped to frame them. But they contain, none the less, the symbols of the entire Catholic Faith, of all that the Church has seen or known of deepest Reality. They distill, as in a concentrated essence, that more diffuse truth which is the content of the Church's whole experience.

One of these Creeds, the Nicene Symbol, has been framed and promulgated by a universal council of the Bishops of the Catholic Church, called together for this specific purpose during the early part of the fourth century. The result is that the Nicene Creed might be called, in some sense, the most authentic of the three Catholic Symbols. It is certainly the most subtle of the three, the most philosophically exact, the most technically perfect. Like some great picture of the high Renaissance, not only is its content adequate, but its execution is both rich and flawless.

The so-called Apostles' Creed, on the other hand, issues from no formal council, but has grown in content and form through

several early centuries, beginning with the earliest days in the life of the local Church in the city of Rome. It is adequate; but it is austere, and bare of philosophical subtleties. It presupposes more collateral knowledge on the part of those who use it. It has more the quality of folk-art, or perhaps, in comparison with the Nicene Creed, that of an Italian Primitive in comparison with the picture of the Renaissance.

The so-called Athanasian Creed,³ on the other hand, a century or two later in its origin than the Creed of Nicea, most probably issues from the pen of one man. It has much more the nature of a religious poem than have either of the other two Catholic Creeds. It gives the impression of an ecstatic rhapsody to the Catholic Faith, of a paean of joy in the contemplation of the subtleties and harmonies of the Church's religious heritage. It contains also fear-compelling warnings against the neglect of this heritage. It is a great and true work of art, a thing made to be sung, a glorious hymn to Christian truth. Here, faith, poetry and music seem to meet, and no one can fail to be borne along upon its cadences, carried upward in its glowing notes of certainty and exultation; for here the solemn truths which the Apostles' Creed expresses with severe simplicity suddenly glow like windblown fires, reflecting mystically here on earth the very glory of the Beatific Vision.

The Church, having expressed herself, whether through the Creed of an official Council, through a Creed grown up in her common and popular usage, or through one which is the product of the single genius of one of her sons, has then stood back, as it were, to pass judgment upon her own work. She, who in her early life first beheld the full vision of the Faith and later made bold to express this in her Creeds, has then had to decide whether her own Symbols were adequate to her intention. It is in this way that the three Catholic Creeds have received their definitive acceptance. Once put into form, they have long ago been given back again to the great body of the Faithful, both clerical and lay, for judgment concerning their adequacy. With the passage of years, and after receiving certain minor changes

³ *Quicumque Vult*, from its opening words, "Quicumque vult salvus esse, whoever will be saved . . ."

in this process of criticism, they have satisfactorily met this final test. Therefore, they are now considered to possess a corresponding, final authority. Furthermore, this final authority is infallible and inerrant, because the Church believes that this whole process of authoritative formulation of the Faith has involved much more than mere human experience, and more than the merely human judgments of the minds and hearts of men. The Church also believes that, to the Faithful who live within her social unity, is given, corporately and for this very purpose, the sure and special leading of the Holy Spirit, that Spirit of God who was sent to her by her risen and ascended Lord.

The doctrinal authority of the Catholic Church always emerges within this kind of threefold process. No creedal statement can be said to be "of authority" until the truth for which the statement stands has first been discerned by the Church; then, formally expressed by her; and, finally, accepted back into her corporate experience, as being adequately and satisfactorily expressed under that particular form of words.

It may be remarked, in this connection, that belief in the Papal Infallibility seems to be an attempt to escape the necessity of the final stage of the foregoing process. Infallible Papal pronouncements are defined as "irreformable in themselves and not dependent upon the consent of the Church." But even in the cases of "infallible" Papal pronouncements, it is discovered, in actual present-day experience, that there can arise among expert Roman theologians, as well as among the Roman Catholic laity themselves, differences of opinion as to whether some particular pronouncement really is to be recognized as "infallible" or not! If such differences of opinion can exist, this fact alone seems to show clearly that the third process in the making explicit of all Catholic authority cannot really be avoided. For even the Roman Church, in making up her corporate mind about the infallibility of some given Papal pronouncement, is actually engaging in this final activity, namely the reacceptance of the pronouncement by the Church, as "of authority." It has, in fact, often been pointed out that the complete avoidance of this final step would require an automatically

infallible body of clergy and laity corresponding to an infallible Pope. This body would need to be endowed with an instinctive capacity for the unerring recognition of the correct formulation of infallible truth. And this instinctive, infallible capacity would have to function from the very instant that any given Papal pronouncement might appear. An instinctive capacity of this kind clearly does not exist within the corporate body of the Catholic Faithful. Ultimately, even the doctrine of Papal Infallibility must be "interpreted" to fit the stubborn facts of the Church's clear historical experience.

Thus does the Church put forth her Creeds, and like a good artist, steps back and carefully examines her tentatively completed Symbols. In the course of time she nearly always puts to them certain corrections, additions or changes, like finishing touches here and there, and then promulgates them as finally authoritative for her future generations. In a certain sense, then, the Creeds contain "the Faith once delivered to the Saints";⁴ and from this point of view, they may be considered as complete and final in themselves. However, they possess that kind of completeness which, in the light of the foregoing discussion, may be attributed to great works of art, when they leave the hands of their creators. Like these, the Creeds are intended as symbolic bases for fresh counter-creative activity on the part of a public. And this public, in the case of the Creeds, is to be identified precisely with the Church herself. It is the great body of the Faithful throughout all succeeding ages, now shifting their activity into this new counter-creative role.

In order to respond to the Faith of the Creeds in an adequate manner, the children of the Church must receive an appropriate training. This implies an education for their religious tasks analogous to that aesthetic training which we have seen is necessary for the understanding and counter-creative appropriation of every work of art. In this kind of training, no intellectual equipment, and no good relationships or experiences of practical life can be alien to the education of anyone who would seek to understand the Creeds. But a special Christian equipment is also required, which must include such things as an intellectual

⁴ Jude 3.

knowledge of Christian history, of those events to which the Creeds briefly refer. It should also include at least some knowledge of that philosophy of whose vocabulary the Creeds make use. Above all, it will include deep personal experiences gained in the practice of prayer and worship, through which alone can be developed and strengthened those necessary inner affections by which souls are bound to God. Of such are the psychological stores out of which may be counter-created those individual structures of the Faith which, through the mediation of the Creeds, the Church seeks to have correspond to her own primary experience, in the experience of all her sons and daughters. The Catholic Religion, considered in this way, as a counter-creative reappropriation of the Faith into the life and experience of the Faithful in every age, is surely Queen of all the Arts.

The Faith of the Creeds is all too often thought of as something cut and dried, something authoritatively crystallized, to be either assented to or rejected before a living experience of that Faith may even be initiated. It is thought of as a static, if not a dead, thing, in which the newcomer can have no peculiar creative part; a thing which he may take or leave, but to the completeness of which the presence of one new believer, more or less, is coldly irrelevant. This is such an inadequate conception of the function of the Catholic Creeds that it can be labelled as almost completely false. No individuals, no groups of men and women, ever approach the Faith entirely empty-handed. No new counter-creative achievements in the presence of the Creeds are any less relevant to the Creeds' content than are the analogous efforts of an audience in the presence of great orchestral works. For in a genuine and deep sense, the Catholic Faith grows and matures with the counter-creative cooperation of succeeding generations. The reappropriations of that Faith into fresh patterns of practical action, and of inner experience, in the lives of even the most obscure Christians, continue to make up new and unique jewels, each one absolutely irreplaceable by any other one, set in the Crown of Christ. Thus, it is only those men and women who come forward, consciously and with a good will, to cooperate in their necessary counter-cre-

ative work, into the presence of that Faith which the Catholic Creeds present to them, who can, in any significant sense, repeat their "*Credo*, I believe." The Creeds, to be believed, must not be thought of as if they were solid, inert, unyielding platforms of abstract intellectual knowledge. Instead, they have to be regarded as efficient springboards to fresh practical action and to renewed religious experience, throughout every succeeding generation of human life.

III

CREATION AND THE FALL OF MAN

THE Creeds begin with the statement that God is the "Maker of heaven and earth." This means, as we have already noted,¹ that God the Father is recognized as the source of all things and the Creator of the ordered universe. It follows, therefore, that as we seek to enlarge our own equipment both for understanding and for experiencing the Creeds, we shall do well to begin by attempting to clarify our concepts of the idea of creation. To understand this very first phrase of the Creeds, we should be able, at the outset, to give a clear rational account of the kind of process we have in mind when we refer thus to the creation of our universe in general, and, in particular, of what we mean when we speak of the creation of man.

A clarification of our concepts of the meaning of creative action will presently appear doubly necessary, when we begin to consider the fact that the order of our present universe, as we now know it, seems, in some very deep and radical manner, to have become disordered. The perfection of our creation seems to have been disastrously marred, and to be in sad need of some kind of re-perfection. Our world, fallen into a strange disorder, appears as something which, if not entirely relapsed into complete chaos, stands, at any rate, in dire need of at least a partial re-creation.

As a matter of fact, when we speak of creating something, we may be thinking of any one of three somewhat different, or, at least, intellectually separable processes. In the first place, creation may imply the making of something out of nothing, the bringing into existence of something at a point at which literally nothing had existed before the moment of a particular creative act. This kind of creation is what is called creation *ex nihilo*. We may suppose that it is in this sense we must speak of

¹ Chapter I, p. 13.

the creation of that primal matter which was the foundation substance of the material world of our present experience. It happens that we ourselves know nothing whatever of this kind of creation. It is probably impossible for our human minds even to picture or to comprehend a process of this sort, if we try to hold rigorously to all its implications. Creation *ex nihilo* certainly never occurs in any scientific laboratory, nor is it ever observed within the world around us. Matter, which already exists in some form, may change its form, or be altered in its internal relationships. Matter may thus change, either as we manipulate it, or as it is altered within the ordinary processes of nature. Nevertheless, even in a world where that which we call matter and that which we call energy are now known to be, at least partially, interconvertible, no quantities of either matter or energy ever suddenly appear anywhere, or in any way, unless there also disappear other corresponding quantities of matter or energy, according to the circumstances of the case under observation. Indeed, to attempt to describe a process whereby that which is nothing becomes that which is something would, scientifically speaking, be meaningless. In order to follow such a process, we would have to begin, it would seem, by investigating "that which is nothing"; and one can conceive of no operation whereby this could be carried out.²

In this latter connection, it is worthy of note that certain miraculous events recorded in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, may seem, at first glance, to deal with this kind of creation *ex nihilo*. Elijah, we are told, provided flour and oil for an impoverished woman. Through Elijah's miraculous intervention, her supplies of these two staples wasted not nor failed for many days, no matter how much of them she herself consumed in the provision of her household.³ Also, Our Lord once miraculously supplied food to a multitude of about five thousand people, who had followed Him into the countryside to hear Him preach. Apparently, He was able to do this without first obtaining any other food supplies beyond the

² For an interesting discussion concerning the kinds of questions which are "scientifically meaningless," see P. W. Bridgman, *The Logic of Modern Physics*, New York, 1928, pp. 28 ff.

³ I Kings 17:12-15.

acceptance of a small luncheon which a little boy of the company happened to have in his wallet for his own use.⁴

Nevertheless, we read that the widow, previous to Elijah's miracle, already possessed "a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse"; and when Our Lord fed the five thousand, He, too, began this operation by using some already existing visible organized matter, in this case the "five barley loaves and two small fishes," graciously, if somewhat naively, brought forward by a little lad. It follows that even miracles of this kind do not offer any clear examples of creation *ex nihilo*. Instead, they are examples of a creative action involving certain already existing things. In the two cases here cited, the volumes or quantities of the things involved are recorded to have been greatly increased. However, increasing of the volumes of already existing things is a very different sort of process, even when considered solely from a material, physical standpoint, than is the bringing of something into existence out of literally nothing at all.

We come, therefore, to a second and much more familiar meaning of the word "creation." In ordinary usage, when we speak of creating something, we do not refer to creation *ex nihilo* at all. Instead, we refer to the common process of arranging, or of rearranging, of ordering, or of re-ordering, something which, in one form or another, already exists. Creation, in this sense of the word, might mean either bringing a certain order out of a complete initial chaos, or it might be applied to an operation of taking something which already has a certain order of its own, and then making a new arrangement of it. This latter act would be the creation of a new order, by re-ordering some prior order, into another form or to a new purpose.

Examples of this kind of creation are familiar to everyone. It is the kind of creative work which an artist performs when he takes various pigments and a piece of canvas and proceeds to paint a picture. In such cases, the pigments, as well as the canvas, already exist as material objects in our universe. In fact, they have already received, through previous operations, the grinding and mixing of the paints and the weaving of the cotton

⁴ John 6:9.

into canvas, a certain created order in their own right. The creative artist thus takes materials which, although they are not in the category of complete chaos, are, nevertheless, relatively disordered, that is, relatively chaotic, with respect to the ordered purpose he himself has in view. By means of his own creative ordering capacity, the artist then brings the pigments and the canvas into a system of completely new relationships, relationships which emerge in an ordered pattern very different from the mutual relationships obtaining between the paints and the canvas, while the paints were still in their leaden tubes, and the canvas was still in its rolled and uncut bolt. But the result of this creative activity on the part of the artist, is a picture, something entirely new, now created within our world. Nevertheless, the newness of the picture consists not in newness of the materials of its content. These were already in existence before the painting came into being. The created newness of the picture consists, instead, in newness of arrangement, newness of certain mutual relationships, introduced, through the creative imagination of an artist, into the midst of already existing things.

This second kind of creative action is also that which may be observed in the vital processes of living things. All plants, and all animal bodies, continually seize upon relatively chaotic materials which are found within their environmental world, and they incorporate whatever of these materials they find suitable into the orders of their own living structures. In vital processes of this sort, we may discern inanimate and relatively chaotic matter, such as the carbon dioxide gas of the atmosphere, or mineral salts and water contained in surrounding soil, or, in the case of animals, food, passing into the new ordered relationships of growing, self-maintaining organisms. Often, also, living organisms, for the purposes of creative incorporation into their own vital orders, seize upon other living, ordered organisms for this use. The grass blades of a pasture, for instance, present to us examples of a creative process, which grass is able to carry forward within our world, by virtue of its own peculiar creative power. Grass blades are, therefore, always new creations with respect to the relatively chaotic materials of air and earth which

are made to enter into the order of the grass itself. Nevertheless, with respect to the body of, let us say, a cow, they are themselves relatively chaotic and unordered. They are "raw materials," upon which that animal's body may itself seize, breaking down the order of the grass and creating the material content of the latter into a new system of living relationships. In creative life-processes of this kind, we are continually aware of how "the old order changeth, yielding place to new."

Once again, in connection with the Bible, it is interesting to note that the compiler of the Book of Genesis may be attempting to draw a partial distinction between the two foregoing kinds of creation which we have been illustrating. He writes that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void."⁵ These two sentences seem to describe the creation by God of the primeval material chaos "out of nothing"—*ex nihilo*. The writer has nothing more to say on this subject. As a matter of fact, there is probably nothing more to be said. Certainly, there is here described a kind of creative event which, as we have now seen, falls quite outside any known human experience. However, the author of the Biblical account of creation then goes on to relate how God, using the material content of this primeval chaos, the "earth without form," as a foundation substance, proceeded subsequently to order it into the world of our experience.⁶ Thus, we are told that the first day of creation was devoted to a process of division of light from darkness, a process which would seem in some way to symbolize an ordering into groups of those materials which were at first evenly distributed or mixed throughout chaos, and which were therefore, in the beginning, indistinguishable the one from the other. In this way, according to the account of Genesis, the creation process was continued until, as a culminating creative act, "The Lord God formed man from

⁵ Genesis 1:1.

⁶ It need not be implied that the creation of primal matter *ex nihilo* and the creation of a cosmos out of this chaos must be thought of as events separated by a lapse of time. They can equally well be thought of as simultaneous. St. Augustine (*De Genesi ad litt.* IV, 51-56) suggests that the "six day" succession in the creation of our cosmos, as recorded in Genesis, does not imply an actual succession of any sort in time, but is rather to be applied to the hierarchical nature-order of our creation.

the dust of the ground." Here we find a most unpromising bit of chaos arranged or ordered into the supreme product known to us of God's creative activity within the natural world. It is with creation in this second sense of the word, namely that of bringing original order out of complete chaos, or of re-ordering some already existing order into new and fresh arrangements, that we shall here be concerned when we shall presently speak of the Incarnation as a Divine Process for the re-creation of the world.

Now, God the Father, "Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible,"⁷ is known as a Being of both infinite wisdom and infinite power. He is also infinitely good. It is therefore impossible to conceive of an ordered universe issuing from the activity of His creative will, which could be anything other than one whose own order, according to its created nature, would be perfect. The original order of God's creation must be supposed completely to have corresponded to, or to have reflected, without the slightest distortion, that perfection which belongs to God Himself. God, as infinitely good, cannot be the source and Author of a creation which, by an act of His own will, would be destined, from its beginning, to contain elements of evil. Or again, God, who in Himself is infinite and perfect love, cannot be thought of as creating other orders of beings who, in their very nature and from their own beginning, could have contained essential elements of malice and hatred; or who could be foredoomed, by a necessity of that same created nature which was given to them, to seek, in their subsequent activities, self-regarding goals and ends of their own devising, which would in some way fall short of that proper goal or end which their Creator had Himself desired to set for them. In other words, if a created order issues from the activity of an omnipotent and perfect will, it is inconceivable that this order should possess anything less than a corresponding perfection appropriate to its nature, or that elements of disorder, relative to this perfection, should have been left within it from the beginning. God's creative command over primeval chaos was complete, and within His cosmos no traces of unordered

⁷ Nicene Creed.

chaos could have persisted in defiance of His perfecting, sovereign will. The writer of Genesis briefly sums up these facts in his comment upon completed creation: "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good."⁸

In profound contrast to this original perfection of creation, we ourselves now find the world of actual human experience far from perfect. On the contrary, our world appears corrupted and enmeshed in a far-reaching disorder which seems, humanly speaking, to be beyond all hope of any complete or entire re-perfection. Furthermore, when in addition we ask how it comes about that chaos has been reintroduced into cosmos, that at least a partial disorder has been allowed so disastrously to encroach upon an originally perfect order, the answer, obviously, is not to be found in ascribing this sad change to God Himself. With God there can be "no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning."⁹ Therefore, the origin of that disorder which is now apparent in our world must, instead, be sought in some source which lies within creation itself. Our disorders must proceed from some created element which, even while potentially entirely at home within the unblemished ordered framework of an original perfection, was, nevertheless, also endowed, as an attribute of its nature, with another free potentiality of marring or destroying that very order which contained it and within which it originally had its own essential part. And the search for this kind of potential source of disorder leads us directly to man himself.

Man stands at the apex of the whole hierarchy of our created natural order. He has this position by virtue of the fact that he is unique among all the created beings in our material world through having been endowed, at his creation, with a rational intellect. It is this unique element of man's nature which makes it possible to describe him alone as made "in the image of God."¹⁰ Man may be thus described because his capacity for rational thought, including that kind of free action which follows upon such thought, gives to him to some limited extent,

⁸ Genesis 1:31.

⁹ James 1:17.

¹⁰ Genesis 1:27.

at least, a God-like power of creative ordering activity. Man, in some measure, and in so far as his created rational endowment makes it possible, is competent and free to act within our creation, in some sense, as God Himself also acts. By taking thought, and by exercising that freedom of will which is the essential property of his rational intellect, man can take a truly origina-tive part in bringing new patterns of order out of older patterns. He can work with design, and he can shape both things and events toward a desired, a preconceived or pre-imagined goal. He alone, among all other created beings, possesses, by the gift of his Creator, the high privilege of cooperating with Him in the development and the unfolding of God's own creative purpose for His world.

In this latter connection, we must now observe that the order which, at the beginning of creation, was called forth from pri-meval chaos, was no static or immobile order. With order in space, it is obvious that there also appeared an order in time. And a perfection of created order in time not only does not, but, in the nature of the case cannot, entail an absence of all change. In time there are always successions of events. Indeed, what we call time is experienced by us only under the form of event sequences. In this particular respect, therefore, the qual-ity of what we may label as a perfected order in space differs from the quality of that which we may, with an equal correct-ness, label a perfected order in time. In other words, order in space does not involve change, whereas, order in time always does.

For instance, a painted picture presents to us an example of a perfected created order in space, when it is completed or "fin-ished." It then leaves the hand of the artist, and there is noth-ing more to be done to it, nothing further to be added or changed. In so far as the artist has succeeded in expressing his intention, the newly created material order which we call the picture, may now be termed perfect.

On the other hand, all order among events which succeed one another in time presents to us the phenomenon of what is called change. For example, let us consider, not the picture finished or perfected merely in space, but, instead, the series of

events in time which were involved during the process of its painting. In what sense can it also be said that this series of events is perfect, even at a point in time at which the picture itself remains, let us say, only one-half completed? The answer to this question has already been indicated. The series of events which make up the history of the painting of the picture can be described as perfect, if, when we suddenly call a halt to them at some time frontier, such as, for example, the halfway point, we find that we can, upon examination, discover them all to be moving, in perfect harmony, towards their appointed end. Thus, in the case of our hypothetical picture, the process of its painting is properly called perfect at any particular stage if every brush stroke, every line, every light and shadow, then actually on the canvas, are found to be perfectly arranged and adapted to serve as a foundation for that future work which the artist has still to perform upon the picture, in order to complete its creation.

To take another analogy, a certain grown man of our acquaintance might chance to possess what could be described as a perfect human body. Full-grown, well-formed according to the nature of human bodies, it might present an example of living material order in space, which could be called perfect, in the sense of being "finished," or, at any rate, completely mature, having attained to its appointed material end. On the other hand, a baby's body, although it obviously does not possess its final or "completed" order, could, nevertheless, be described as perfect, if we could see that, at some particular point of time in its growth, the infant body showed full evidence of being in process of development toward that adult maturity which shall one day be proper to it.

We may probably think of the initial order of our created world as having possessed that kind of perfection, within the time process, which we have just discussed. At the beginning of its history, our world certainly presented a very different appearance from that which it now presents. Nevertheless, it had, we believe, an ordered form, which was perfectly adapted to its later evolution or development. The series of world events which were set in motion at the beginning of the existence of

our universe began to move forward in a complete harmony, perfectly adapted toward the attainment of that final end which God originally intended for His whole creation.

At this stage of our discussion it is unnecessary to raise the question, so often asked concerning those ordered sequences of events which, in their succession, make up the history of our material creation, of whether or not our order in time is a predetermined one. In other words, we need not here enter upon either a physical or a metaphysical enquiry about the cases which might be made for either determinism or indeterminism, as the possible principles informing the order of our material creation's development. It may, in fact, be true that world history, in so far as inanimate nature, and even animate nature, apart from man, are concerned in it, can properly be thought of as a series of events which, in its inevitable succession in time, was, in some sense, completely predetermined from its first initiation, was fixed in advance from the very instant that its creation in time, as well as its creation in space, sprang from its Creator's hand. If we do thus, in fact, live in a universe which, again, apart from man, is physically predetermined, it is also conceivable that every event in all its ordered future might have been wholly predictable in advance and from its very beginning, had someone, armed with sufficient knowledge for the task, been present at that primal event. In passing, it should be remarked that, at present, neither the physical nor the biological sciences lend support to this mechanistic view of world history, as an event-sequence wholly predetermined in its material order. However, we are not here concerned to argue that particular point.

On the other hand, since man is created as a rational animal, he, among all other creatures, possesses a certain freedom in his own right. From the moment of his appearance within the world, he has, of course, been involved in the succession of events composing all world history; but it must be emphasized that he has been thus involved under at least one condition which applies to him alone. Whether or not the ordered time succession of the rest of creation might otherwise have been fixed from its beginning, man's contributions to created order,

in either space or time, have to be recognized as containing, at heart at least, certain elements of original and, therefore, not mechanistically necessary or predictable design. Man's contributions to created order, although he himself is both within that order and a very real part of it, certainly contain elements which cannot be said to be completely determined or conditioned by any force or influence, or from any source whatever, which is external to the free rational mind of man himself. This is the peculiar dignity which God has reserved for man. Furthermore, without this dignity of rational freedom and of originative creative power, man would cease to be human. Without his rational mind, he could be thought of as differing from the rest of animate or even inanimate creation in degree only, and not in kind. He could not then be spoken of as made in the image of God.

The historical process of the created world began, as we have said, to move forward with every element within it perfectly adapted to the eventual fulfilment of a Divinely appointed end. However, man's contributions to this created harmony were, to some extent, left to him to be freely made. His part within the historical order was left to him, according to the measure of his nature, to be freely played. Man, with an original knowledge both sufficient and adequate to his task, was permitted, or, more properly, was invited to cooperate toward the realization of the Divine intention. He was expected to do this through the dedication and free devotion of all his own rational energies and creative capacities, unreservedly to God's purpose. In this respect, human beings, living and working within the flowing harmony of God's creation, might be likened to the members of an orchestra who, performing under the direction of a great conductor, possess and exercise both the will and the ability to follow the intention of their leader, while they play a given musical composition. In this kind of process, the members of an orchestra are never mere automatons, but they must continually give themselves, with intelligence and through purposefully sustained acts of will, to the ordered performance of the orchestral work in hand. In like manner, the historical order of human life, in its personal, individual, and in its social aspects,

was intended by God to be maintained through a perfectly integrated, but none the less free, human cooperation in His creative purpose. And this free cooperation was to be sustained by all succeeding generations of human beings, to the end of time.

Continuing this analogy of the members of an orchestra performing perfectly, though freely, under the direction of a leader, we may also note that, while every individual member possesses a capacity adequate to the maintaining of his own share in that developing order, nevertheless, by the same token, he also has it in his power to withhold his free cooperation. Any individual member of an orchestra could, if he so wished, suddenly and quite perversely, refuse to follow his notes or to obey his director. He could, if he chose, play discordant notes, out of key or out of the common rhythm.

In somewhat the same manner, man, within the wholeness of the developing order of God's created world, through the exercise of that same rational capacity by virtue of which he had hitherto cooperated to maintain that order, could also choose, with an equal perversity, suddenly to seek discordant modes of behavior. He could turn himself from that end which was set for him by God, and he could move toward other less worthy ends of his own devising, minor and immediate ends, rather than his true and farther end which, for man, is to be found only in God Himself. This risk, that a rational and free created being like man might thus withhold his cooperation in the maintenance of the perfection of created order, was, one might say, the great adventure¹¹ which God was willing to make. He created an ordered world whose unblemished maintenance was permitted to remain partly dependent upon the choices and creative actions of certain created beings within it. And, incidentally, we may conclude from this that there must be something infinitely precious, there must exist potentialities of an almost incomprehensible value, in man's endowment of individual, rational freedom, since this seems to have been held by God as sufficient to compensate for the enormous risk which it inherently entails of the destruction of created order itself.

¹¹ Cf. Paul Elmer More, *The Sceptical Approach to Religion*, Princeton University Press, 1934, pp. 193-194.

As a matter of fact, at some point man did fail to respond to God's invitation with the necessary complete cooperation. He had been given sufficient knowledge to insure success in this collaboration. He had been given sufficient power and spiritual strength. In theological terms, man had been endowed with sufficient natural grace to maintain God's created order when this was entrusted into his hands. He failed, then, through a deliberate, wrong choice, a free misdirection of his own rational ordering capacities away from God's original purpose. And this was the single unique thing in which God, as Creator of free man, could not then intervene. Man's rational freedom, even to introduce disorder into created perfection, could not be forceably overruled without causing man, through that same overruling act, to become something less than human.

We are therefore compelled to the conclusion that it was more nearly concordant with God's own original purpose to permit the perfection of His creation to be marred and blemished, while man was kept in some sense free, even though free in discordant action, than it would have been to have maintained or restored that perfection by some Divine act external to man, which, at the same time, must have obliterated the rational Divine image in man. Better, it would seem, judging by the world as we now know it, a partly disordered world, with man, even to a limited extent, still rational and free within it, than an otherwise reperfected world, with man irrevocably destroyed as a true human being.

We do not need to consider here the problem of the point in world history in which this dereliction of the human will first occurred. The story of the Fall of Man in the Book of Genesis gives us, certainly, no more than a myth about the fact. Neither does the idea of man's lapse necessarily conflict with the natural knowledge which we possess of his emergence out of a long evolutionary ancestry of developing animal forms. The "Creation of Man" can scarcely refer to some sudden event, very complex in character, but, nevertheless, analogous to the moulding of a statue by an artist out of clay. Man, as an animal species, certainly has a long evolutionary history in the natural order of our world. However, man as free and rational, that is, as a true

human being, remains unaccounted for solely on the basis of an animal ancestry. It is conceivable that one may think of man, the animal, as a kind of living vehicle or organic vessel, prepared in the evolutionary process, made ready to receive, when he had reached an appropriate stage of development, his later gift of rational freedom. We might, on this view, place what is called the "Creation of Man" at that moment in evolutionary history at which man the animal became endowed with his free rational capacity for cooperating creatively with God's purpose within the universe. Perhaps the tradition of God's asking Adam to name the animals in the Garden of Eden¹² is symbolic of man's first effort at cooperation in an intelligent ordering process. This describes a truly creative activity in our second sense of that word, because naming things is an initial step in the scientific ordering process which we call classification. Whether or not this latter thought seems somewhat fanciful, we seem to find here a third modification of the meaning of the word "creation." This sense of the word would mean the sharing of the Divine Reason; and through this, the power of bringing order out of chaos or a new order out of an older one. It would mean the giving to man a certain power of fresh and origination creation in his own right. And it is clear that we have here a third content of the meaning of creation which can be applied only to that act which is called the "Creation of Man." It is the special, the unique Divine act which is the sending down of the Divine creativity, reserved solely as the heritage of human creatures. Thus man alone, in all the universe, has been created rational and free.

Now, however, as we have just seen, the tragic additional fact remains that man has also deliberately rejected his opportunity for this kind of free participation in perfection. He has chosen instead, whether practically coincidentally with his gift of freedom or at a later time after an historical interval of "innocence" does not greatly matter, to bring disorder once again into the order of his world, into both the world of individual interior experience and that of his social environment. It is this fact to which theologians refer as the fact of "Original Sin."

¹² Genesis 2:19.

It must be observed that the Catholic doctrine of Original Sin attempts to give no literal account of the exact historical circumstances whereby sin or disorder came to be a feature of our created world. Neither does it raise new or unheard of questions or problems. It does not give what we may call an "explanation" of the origin of evil. But neither is the doctrine of Original Sin mere speculation. It is, instead, a realistic statement of something which is, unfortunately, of long and tragic human experience. The doctrine simply states a most obvious fact, which must be independently evident to anyone, that in the midst of much surviving original order there are also present in the individual and social lives of all men, conflicts, disorders, disarrays, in other words, elements of chaos. And in addition, this doctrine puts the blame for this state of affairs where everyone who believes in God is logically compelled to put it. It puts it upon the free creative rational minds of men themselves, who have deliberately refused to cooperate in the maintenance of that original order, the preservation of whose perfection was, at the outset, so gloriously entrusted into their hands.

The world of our present experience, disordered and, with chaos partly reintroduced, is called a "fallen world." But it can be seen from the foregoing discussion that the Church may not view this world as being evil in its very essence. The scattered materials and elements of its creation may still be looked upon and discerned, as at the beginning, when "behold they were very good." What has happened is not that some new created thing which is itself essentially evil has been intruded into the world, but rather that the original materials or elements of an original order have got sadly out of that order. It is as if our present natural world of men and women were like some great and noble work of art which has been broken into a thousand fragments. Gold and jewels and carefully chiselled bits of wood and stone lie in scattered pieces on every side. Perhaps a great many of these fragments may even still preserve a certain appearance of their individual, original perfections, as would, for example, small statues or other carvings if they fell unharmed from their appointed places amidst the wreckage

of some destroyed large building. We might even find some such statue now being used to another, if less important, purpose. What has vanished completely, however, is the original harmonious and functional order of all these good materials and structural elements together. As the writer of a recent story makes one of his characters observe: "Some people imagine that everything—the disjointed circumstances which attend the business of living—can be made to fit neatly together, like a jigsaw puzzle. The trouble is that all the pieces come from different puzzles. They may fit something, but not together."¹³ A better metaphor could scarcely be found for the kind of world we are here describing.

Some instances of disorder, which can rather easily be seen as fragments of an antecedent total order, may now be briefly given, because such things are the characteristic earmarks of a fallen world.

Consider first, for one example, two powerful natural human motives for enthusiastic action which are discoverable in the psychological makeup of every normal man and woman. One of these is that of self-love. This motive leads to actions on the part of every individual in the interest of the greatest possible happiness for himself. This motive cannot by any means be condemned as essentially evil in itself. St. Thomas Aquinas says that all men must seek happiness as the final end of human life,¹⁴ and Our Lord Himself approves a commandment which reads: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."¹⁵ Unless we presuppose a self-love, even a certain attitude of self-seeking, both intelligent and consistent, this latter commandment is quite devoid of meaning. We are commanded, as a counsel of perfection, to love our neighbors not more than ourselves, but rather to the same degree. Therefore, we may conclude that neither radical self-deprecation, nor disregard for the attainment of the greatest possible degree of personal happiness, can be considered good, from the standpoint of either natural or

¹³ Ernest Brace in "Cowards of us All," *New Masses* Literary Section, June 14, 1938. The quotation is here transferred from the original subjunctive to the indicative mood.

¹⁴ *Summa Theologica*, 1^a II^{ae}, Quæst. 1.

¹⁵ Matt. 22:39; Lev. 19:18.

Christian morality. Therefore, the desire for happiness must be thought of as an important ordered element in the development of a perfected humanity.

Side by side with this quite proper impulse to seek personal happiness, there exists another and, perhaps, a more immediately powerful motive for human action. This is that impulse which all men find in some degree natural and normal, namely, to give themselves, without thought of an exclusive self-regard or of an immediate personal gain, to the service of their fellow men. All men possess, potentially at least, a spirit of what is called self-sacrifice, which clearly seems part of their natural human endowment. They find it desirable to forego certain immediate, personal goods and compensations for the sake of entering into a larger corporate effort which may, at times, even bring individual discomfort and pain. Who has not found a high satisfaction in giving time or money or effort to some corporate social cause, it may be, for example, a Red Cross drive, it may be a movement for better laboring-class housing, or for the development of young peoples' clubs and playgrounds? For all normal people there is a true natural joy in this kind of self-giving. Furthermore, this is by no means some specially noble or highly cultivated religious joy. It is part of our natural human psychological equipment that we can find satisfaction and a sense of well-being in forgetting the immediate requirements of self, in common corporate efforts with our fellow men, for a common corporate good.

At first thought, these two motives for human action may seem mutually contradictory. Actually, in an ordered world, they would be found not in opposition, but correlative. Men are intended by God to seek individual happiness, that is true. But if created order, both within the human spirit and within the social historical process, is to be maintained, this happiness must be sought and worked for only in man's true final end, which is in God Himself. St. Augustine voices this fundamental fact of true human nature when he exclaims: "Thou hast made us for thyself, O God, and our souls are unquiet until they rest in thee."¹⁶ This is that natural and proper "selfishness" which

¹⁶ *Confessions*, I, 1.

is permissible to all men. And this kind of higher "selfishness," if we may thus use a word commonly employed with very different connotations, is perfectly compatible with the other deep human motives of self-giving and sacrifice. Within the historical process of this world, men, who were created as social beings, should have worked corporately together for the fulfilment of God's will and for the maintenance of that created corporate perfection which had been committed to them in the beginning. This would have turned out to be a glorious and profoundly satisfying, common undertaking.

In other words, the true nature of our creation is even now such that, if its original order had been maintained from the beginning, the so-called selfish, or the self-regarding motive in human action, the desire for personal happiness, would be satisfied exclusively by the direction of human wills to man's final end. Here too would be found a completely adequate satisfaction of man's legitimate desire for individual happiness, if he but kept in his mind the fact that his own nature is such that his true happiness can be ultimately fulfilled only in union with God. In the meantime, while developing and moving toward this ultimate fulfilment of happiness, provision within our natural world was also made for the satisfaction of that other motive of human action, namely, self-giving and individual devotion to a common corporate activity, here and now. This motive could have found its complete fulfilment within the unfolding of the immediate processes of natural creation, which are all provided, not as ends in themselves, but as means of attaining man's final end. Human beings, like the players in the orchestra of our recent analogy, could have "lost" their lives within the harmonious progressive movement of their perfected social order, even while they remained conscious that in a far deeper and an ultimate sense, they were moving toward "finding" their lives and attaining their highest happiness in God. Thus, in a perfected world, Our Lord's dictum of "he that loseth his life shall find it,"¹⁷ would be no mere startling paradox, but a truth, corresponding perfectly to an ordered human nature, completely at home within the environment of

¹⁷ Matt. 10:39.

an ordered world, still reflecting, in its own order, the will of its Creator.

But when we look realistically at our world as it is, we find these two excellent motives for action working neither harmoniously together, nor in a manner directed to their proper ends. On the contrary, our economic and social world "order," as it is now euphemistically called, is founded upon the assumption that man's self-regarding motives must necessarily find their sole possible satisfaction in the immediate material and economic environment. For that search for true happiness whose only end can be God, is substituted a search for immediate material gains and individual satisfactions, without any further reference. That higher "selfishness," which is a thirst for individual fulfilment in God Himself, is forced to find a warped and inadequate outlet within the environment of natural creation. It here appears as the acquisitive instinct, as "enlightened selfishness," and, in the economic order, it receives the name of the "profit motive for production." All orthodox theorists of our present economic order, from the times of Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill down to the present day, state this fact quite frankly. It is openly boasted that our present system of material production is so cunningly devised that it will function most smoothly when men within it succeed best in acting in a manner which Christians are compelled to characterize as a perversion of their true human nature. For our system works on the assumption that men will cease to be occupied primarily with their highest and final good, and will remain, instead, preoccupied with those means which were originally given them only for the purpose of moving toward this end. Thus, means are erected into the position of ends in themselves, a procedure which, St. Augustine says, is of the very essence of sin.¹⁸ In this manner, at least one excellent element of a perfectly ordered human world becomes, instead, a source of profound disorder.

On the other hand, the correlative motive of self-giving and

¹⁸ E.g., "Wherein do you sin unless because you use what you have received in a disorderly manner?" (Sermon 21, 3) The same idea is expanded in the *De Doctrina Christiana*, Book I.

sacrifice finds itself more often than not entirely suppressed. Made an element of human nature that it might serve for the cooperative maintenance of a progressively developing historical order, and that it might find its outlet in the communal production of those rich and full means, both material and spiritual, which are essential to men, as, upon the level of creation they develop toward their final end, it actually finds but a sporadic satisfaction. Our world has turned its back on that Divine order in which the spirit of corporate effort would inevitably be the chief motive for production of material and spiritual goods. As things actually are with us, if everyone did actually give free play to this spirit of devotion to the corporate good, and permitted himself to be guided by a desire to give rather than to get, our present world organization, now run on the basis of the principle of self-seeking, perverted from man's final end to immediate natural satisfactions, would collapse at once. For Christian "goodness," carried out in logical and thorough practice, can easily be seen to be dangerously revolutionary in its implications for our "order." And so it comes about that the indulgence of the excellent impulse to give freely of either time or money to the social good is usually looked upon by us as a kind of luxury. More often than not, it is permitted only to the rich, as their lives draw to a close. Furthermore, even in these cases, it is always assumed that the rich people in question shall have already made their recognizably "constructive" contributions to our actual society, by having previously behaved as acquisitive, rather than as self-giving people, during the period that they were still "in business" and were in the process of preparing themselves for the luxury of giving in later life. In this manner the secular world perverts the exercise of our proper human self-regard to improper ends; and it makes the exercise of self-sacrifice or corporate devotion, probably the most important potential element of a Divinely ordered social life in this world, not only difficult but often quite impossible. As a matter of fact, the actual case, in our world, is even worse than this. The natural impulse to self-sacrifice, to self-losing in corporate action, is not only not given its proper outlet, but, at its highest pitch of enthusiasm, it is now called forth to a de-

monic use. Almost the only way the world knows to tap adequately the great reservoirs of this impulse which are still found in its vigorous youth, is to conjure it forth into channels of false patriotisms, arrogant, strange, mystical nationalisms, and ultimately into the horrors of vast modern wars.

Again, if we examine man's organization and use of his physical environment, we can often readily discern analogous disorders in the juxtaposition of elements which, although good in their own individual rights, turn out to be gravely disordered within the processes where we actually find them. For example, an aeroplane is an excellent unit of order, a magnificent creation within the material environment, which emerges as a fruit of the rational ordering power of the human mind. In a like manner, certain high explosives may also be valued as good in themselves, provided their created order fulfills the specified requirements of their special and proper purposes. However, a charge of high explosive, carried over an open city by an aeroplane, and there dropped, to maim and kill the inhabitants, gives us an excellent example of the evil which may follow from the wrong putting together of created elements which, in other contexts, would be entirely good. Aeroplanes and explosives may be good in themselves, and also when they are put to their proper ordered uses. But used together, in the dreadfully disordered relationship here suggested, they manage to appear as the instruments of the most appalling disorder, thereby serving the purposes of what is called sin. Nevertheless, it is clear that a re-perfection or re-creation of our world would merely require the rearrangement of aeroplanes and explosives into other and good orders; it would not require their abolishment.

Another indication of the disorder of the world is found in the fact that man now seems to have been largely deprived of that rational freedom with which, at his creation, he was endowed. This does not mean that he has lost the potentiality for a more complete and free rational action. It is fairly obvious, nevertheless, that it has become only partially possible for him to exercise such freedom within his present world. Therefore, the will of God can be only imperfectly realized by him.

Perhaps this can be more clearly seen if we revert again to our analogy of an orchestra. As we have seen, if, during the course of playing, even one musician were deliberately to separate himself from the corporate intention, and were to pervert his own individual vocation within the corporate endeavor by playing a wrong note, he would thus introduce an element of disorder into the intended order of the whole. Furthermore, the complete ultimate effects of such a discordant action can be seen, upon analysis, to be very serious indeed. In practice, of course, even a deliberately played wrong note might conceivably soon be forgotten as the playing continued. We have to remember, however, that sounds from the performance of music are often carried far beyond the ears of an immediate audience. The vibrations in the air are bound to continue their outward course, and although the dissipation of their energy might render them humanly inaudible at fairly short distances within the environment, physical effects could be detected, with proper instruments, at a relatively great range. If the orchestra were playing before a microphone, electromagnetic waves, carrying the pattern of the sounds, might escape into the outer universe, and thus, after thousands of light-years, bear the effects of happenings within our hypothetical orchestra even to the farthest star, circulating them in the universe indefinitely. In this way, the effect of one wrong note would become an entrenched element of the physical environment within which all future generations must be born and all future orchestras must play.

The foregoing analogy seems fantastic because the alterations produced in the physical environment of the universe, in this case are, of course, relatively infinitesimal. They seem to be of trivial moment. They are, however, none the less real. Furthermore, with appropriate apparatus, they could conceivably be magnified or amplified many, many times. In this event, they might be made to affect not only a wide physical environment, but even to leave enduringly distorted effects in many other peoples' consciousnesses, thus making an adverse impress upon the order of the human social environment as well. The point to be emphasized is, that by merely playing even one

wrong note, a certain disharmony would inevitably be introduced into the whole of future history.

It may here be objected that if a single member of an orchestra went astray in his playing, either deliberately or by accident, the director would immediately rap the whole band to silence and either start afresh, or, at the least, replay the blemished passage, this time without the particular culprit's musical defection. This, it may be said, would "correct" the error, and the orchestral selection might now be perfectly played.

For all our practical purposes, this kind of "correction" of our chosen example of musical disorder would, of course, suffice. However, if we think rigorously about this matter, a replaying of a correct note, after an error, can never quite restore that order to the universe which existed before the wrong note was played. At least one disharmony is already winging its way endlessly throughout our creation. Men may subsequently sound the same ordered passage correctly, over and over again. The members of the orchestra and of the listening public may themselves rest content with this kind of reparation. The one thing which no man can ever possibly do is quite literally to go backward in time to a point before the wrong note was played, and then live through that moment again, this time playing the passage in question correctly, so that the original error may be, also quite literally, eliminated from the sequence of history. And no amount of re-sounding of the correct note will ever overtake, and thus blot out, the previous disharmony, now set going beyond all recall. Man, being caught within the flux of time, can never actually undo that which has already been wrongly done. Disorders in time past are irrevocably inaccessible to him. And this is the great tragedy of time.

And so it comes about that one, or, at the most, a few deliberately wrong human choices, made at a certain point in history, could irreparably disorder and disarray a whole created environmental order for all future time. And man who in the still perfect order of natural creation at its initiation was quite competent to maintain it, can never again, once this order is marred, make free contributions to the processes of history which will quite achieve a completely perfect result, provided

his efforts be carefully analysed in relation to the order of the world as a whole. Everything which he now chooses to do must be singled out of possible courses of action, possible new patterns of order, none of which is perfect, as it might have been perfect within an environment of a prior, complete order. He must choose instead among actions which, as they spread their effects outward in space, and forward in time, within our universe, must inevitably be, at least partly, frustrated by elements of disorder which were there before their arrival. Man may repair one set of disorders, only to find that his new creation comes into conflict with other partial disorders which he inherits in his environment, and whose own sources and beginnings, rooted in a former time, are quite beyond his reach.

For instance, man may invent machines, only to discover that these new created elements, while bringing obvious further order into life, also cause unemployment and misery in the lives of masses of people, because of conflicting social arrangements which come down out of the past. Or, to take a somewhat different kind of example, he may improve a given social order in such a way that greater leisure periods are provided for men to study or to cultivate the spiritual life, only to find that the disorders already present in human hearts can also appropriate leisure for purposes of debauchery and idleness. Thus man, after the introduction of disorder into that created world of which he is a part, can never thereafter be free to choose a course of action which can be called perfect or good in a complete sense. He can choose only a better, rather than some worse course. This means that he is now free to exercise his rational creative powers only in the sense of being able to choose certain lesser evils in every situation which confronts him; whereas the exercise of his true and complete rational freedom within the created world would consist in his being able always to choose courses of action entirely conformable to the will of God.

In this manner does disorder, once introduced into his environment, react back again upon man himself. To some degree, even the best efforts of his good will must now inevitably be frustrated. The ordered time-process of the world, over which he had been given control, in the sense that at the outset

he was able freely to maintain it, to carry it on, to enrich it, and to guide it harmoniously toward that end which he himself was intended to attain, has now got out of hand in its disorder. Instead of being master of the created historical process, man now finds himself caught and enmeshed in that process itself. He can, to be sure, still quite readily and easily introduce further elements of disorder into the world; but every attempt at restoring a complete integral order to the whole of creation inevitably results also in the introduction of fresh elements which, while they may be ordered and good in themselves, are always found to be out of harmony with other inaccessible disorders already present. Because of this, a tension piles up between the rational will of man in action and the refractory processes of a disordered environment which man cannot completely re-create. And such tension, with its inherent frustrations, reacting back against man from out of the material and social environment, alters, in turn, his interior life. He must now deliberately re-order his own interior structure of intellectual concepts and psychological affections, together with the determination of his will, in such wise that he may cope, not with environmental order, but, in actual practice, with the immediate difficulties of certain intractable disorders.¹⁹ In doing

¹⁹ The aim of much modern psychotherapy seems to be to get its subjects properly adjusted to their respective social environments, as the latter actually exist. In other words, this means teaching people how to come to terms with disorder and then to live in peace with it. In this undertaking, psychotherapy is often successful in eliminating the strains which arise between individuals and their social environments. It should be pointed out, however, that, from a Christian point of view, to adjust people to *disorder* is to turn them into children of the devil rather than of God; and this remains true, even though peace and tranquillity supervene in individual cases.

Strains between individuals and their environments may arise from two sources. First, they may arise chiefly from interior disorders in an individual psyche, while the environment remains relatively good or "normal." In this case, the immediate aims of the psychologist and of the Church may largely coincide. Both would wish to restore a new interior order to the individual. On the other hand, such strains may arise chiefly from disorders in the social environment such that a well-ordered individual psyche revolts from the behavior patterns which that environment enjoins. In this case, the aims of the psychologist and of the Church appear sometimes to be the very opposite of each other. The psychologist would still seek to "adjust" the subject to his environment, accepting the latter as it is, without radical criticism, certainly without radical Christian criticism. The Church, on the other hand, may seek instead to preserve the good individual attitude, if she finds it to be a Christian

this, man may achieve considerable immediate or local "success"; but this must always be gained at the price of still further disarrangements in the order of the universe considered as a whole, and therefore at the cost of man's further removal from that path which would lead him to his true final end.

Man's attempts to re-order his own world, while achieving local results, lead nevertheless on to the kind of added confusion which might result if a neighbor of the member of our orchestra, who, we supposed, had chosen to play a wrong note, attempted himself to improve matters by immediately playing other notes of his own devising, but in harmony with his neighbor's discord, instead of continuing with the rest of the orchestra. If other contiguous players followed a like effort at a restoration of, at least, a kind of local harmony, they might achieve, as we can now see, a certain local "success." Unfortunately, the greater this local success, the greater also the confusion which, by a succession of such occurrences, would spread in the orchestra as a whole. Eventually the players would be split into groups or into individuals, all contending among themselves.

Human corporate life has become disarranged in somewhat this way, so that instead of functioning harmoniously as a whole within an ordered environment of the material world, it is split up into mutually hostile groups which, separately, have achieved a certain interior group order of their own, in whose

one, and, instead of "adjusting" the individual to disorder, move to re-order and to revolutionize the environment, so that the individual order may survive, but now without strain.

Modern psychologists often give a kind of nod in the direction of Christianity, believing that it may prove "useful" to their own purposes. Before the Church responds too readily to this condescension from the direction of "science," she would do well to examine the purposes for which she is about to be "used." More often than not, she may find that the aim of a psychologist is to come to terms with a disorder which she, for her part, ought to be found condemning and correcting, rather than permitting anyone to be "adjusted" to it. Karl Marx knew little of what we today call "psycho-analysis"; neither was he familiar with "psychotherapy." If he had known these branches of science, he might have discerned a potential anti-revolutionary danger from these quarters. "Modern" psychology may yet turn out to hold potentialities for keeping people quiet in the midst of otherwise intolerable disorders. It may yet prove itself to be a new kind of "opium of the people." If this is in any degree the case, the Church can have nothing to do with it.

maintenance, however, the efforts of each group conflict with the efforts of the others. For example, society is divided into economic classes whose special class interests, that is, the promotion of those orders peculiar respectively to each class, mutually and quite fatally conflict. Men and women reacting to these conditions which they inherit, and because of these conflicts, begin to be caught in a web of emotions, class and race prejudices, and even of religious group prejudices. Their emotional attitudes and rational decisions are henceforth conditioned by the interests of their class, rather than by the interests of all men considered together in relation to a common final goal. It is for these reasons that man's natural creative freedom, both spiritual and material, is disastrously limited and impaired by these disorders of Original Sin within a fallen world.

In this connection it may be remarked that Karl Marx, adapting the Hegelian dialectic principle to a materialistic view of the natural world, seems to have given an astonishingly satisfying description of man, as a rational being developing historically within a fallen creation. Marx shows clearly enough how much progress has been made, and can still be made, in the matter of re-achieving and enriching a certain order even within a disordered world. His analyses greatly illuminate the processes of human historical development. They show how human society gets split into economic class groups, and how a single class, by achieving the major control of property, at any given period of history, always tends to get the upper hand. They show how this privileged class arrogates to itself, in some sense, a position which, in a world of order, should actually belong only to all of corporate humanity, working together. That is, the privileged class tends to take possession of the material environment of the world, and then proceeds to treat the other groups or classes of humanity as if they, for their part, were also nothing but matter, exploiting men and women of other classes as if they were on the same level with mines, oil wells, water ways, and the rest of the elements of our passive environment. Thus the Marxian analyses are able to take account of those tensions which, as we have seen, are necessarily piled up by any attempt by man to order a disordered environment purely from

within itself. In addition, they show how these tensions react back again upon man's emotional and intellectual life, until they are released, sometimes cataclysmically, in a radical re-ordering of both material environment and human society. They show how a weaker and suppressed group order may gain in strength, and then suddenly get the better of that class which formerly dominated all the others. The former dominating group is then itself suppressed, and one of the other group orders, grown powerful in its turn, arises to dominate all the rest.

From the Catholic point of view, dialectical materialism, when examined to see whether it fulfils the requirements of an adequate philosophy of reality, fails in at least two serious respects. For one thing, it tends greatly to overestimate the ordered results which can be achieved by men, while they themselves continue to be able to attack the problem only by working from within a fallen world.

The Marxian analysis of the disorders of our world places their seat almost, if not quite, exclusively in that lack of functional, ordered wholeness which is so apparent in our present economic system. As we have now seen, there are obvious, highly distinct social groups or class orders to be found here, and between these there is serious conflict. Marxists would trace all other disorders, in other words, all other sins, to these basic economic discords. Therefore, Marxian theory also claims that if a functional wholeness be once restored to the economic system, if what the Communists call our economic production relationships be but perfected by the establishment of a truly cooperative, economic classless society, then all other conflicts and disorders of which we are so painfully aware, whether in human societies, in international relationships or in individual human spirits, will somehow almost automatically disappear.

It follows, for a Marxist, that what Christians would call the salvation of the world, as far as its natural level is concerned, may be expected to result from the socialization of all industry, the elimination of a Capitalist class, and a consequent abundant production and untrammelled distribution of all material, as well as intellectual and aesthetic goods.

Catholics may well agree with Marxists when they say that one

of the chief obstacles to restoring a complete integral order to human relationships is the existence of the class conflicts and of the contending group interests entrenched within our present Capitalist class-stratified system. They may agree that these disorders are there so deeply entrenched that they cannot be re-created into order without utterly destroying that system. They may therefore also agree that the most obviously necessary and the most immediate step now required, if we are to move in the direction of a redeemed social order, is that of getting rid of Capitalism, with its profits and its competition, and to supplant it with some kind of cooperative system of production of the world's goods, solely for the purposes of the people's use. If a Socialist or Communist order will accomplish this, that, it would seem, ought also to be the most immediate objective of Catholics. But when Marxists insist that a Communist revolution can alone suffice for the complete restoration and the complete reperfecting of the whole of human life, Catholics must reply that this greatly over-simplifies the problem. Difficult, painful, sacrifice-demanding, as this first step itself will surely be—or, indeed, as it has proved to be in Russia—it can be no more than a first step toward the true redemption of the world. For this Marxian solution of the problem disregards the fatal presence of that humanly ineradicable disorder which the world inherits out of past time, and which therefore remains, as we have seen, inaccessible to man. The Marxian solution fails to take account of the fact of Original Sin. Therefore, because of these deep, rational, philosophical reasons which we have been briefly canvassing, Catholics know that perfection cannot be restored to a fallen world merely through the exercise of the natural powers of man, working solely within that world. It is, in fact, for these same profound reasons that so many great sages, from the Buddha in the East to Schopenhauer in the West, quite apart from the Religion of the Incarnation, have turned to a radical pessimism, and have come to the conclusion that the redemption of the world is inherently impossible, and, therefore, intellectually unthinkable.

Christians also have another reason for believing that Communists underestimate the difficulties of the problem of the

world's redemption. This is a reason which may be deduced from a Divine revelation. For Christians know that the Man who began the process of that redemption was rejected by the world, and that He suffered death upon the Cross. A disorder in creation which lies so deep that to attack and to correct it involves, at the very outset, the Crucifixion of the Son of God, must, we are compelled to believe, present a bitter difficulty much greater than any which could be healed by a mere revolution within the human economic order, even though this particular revolution be heralded as a final and a classless one.

But if the Marxian view of man overestimates his creative ordering capacity, in believing that he alone can bring new order out of present relative chaos, nevertheless, with a strange paradox, it also underestimates the highest potentialities of human nature. Marxists would assert that man can achieve his true and final end solely within the environment of material creation. Catholics themselves know that material creation must indeed be redeemed, in order that man may be perfected within it, upon the natural level. They also know, however, that human nature is such that it must, in addition, have certain other and higher potentialities fulfilled. Man is made in the image of God, and in order to realize this image anew he must also be redeemed in a process which leads him beyond even a reperfected natural creation, beyond all time and space, into eternity, and ultimately, to union with God.

Nevertheless, Marxists do great service to Catholics in reminding them that a very great deal not only can, but must still be accomplished within our fallen order, and furthermore, that it is only upon this basis, by beginning to work for the reperfecting of the world on the natural level, that man can hope to be restored to his true end above and beyond it. For man cannot leap the gulf which now separates him from God, caught as he is in a disorder of his own causing, unless a bridge of order be built, re-created out of the materials of that same disordered creation in which he now resides. Just how this bridge is eventually to be built is another matter which we shall presently discuss. In the last analysis, this must, of course, involve man's redemption, not by himself, but by God. Nevertheless, in much

of that preliminary work which must be accomplished in this world, as a foundation for the redemption process, it would seem that there may be discovered an extensive common ground upon which both Catholics and Marxists might meet and work together. In the meantime, the fact that a dialectical materialistic analysis describes so neatly man's actual historical development within his environment, gives an illuminating indication of how greatly he has become enmeshed in the processes of a disordered universe. It indicates how much of that rational freedom which was originally his, has now been lost. That rational man is now in the position of being overruled by a partly uncontrollable historical process, disordered both in time and space, is another tragic earmark of a fallen world.

Finally, we may notice one further symptom of the disorder of our creation. This is to be found in the existence in human life of physical illness, of suffering, of mental derangement, and of death. Let us recall, once again, that the kind of world we have been describing is one which, in its fall from original perfection, has not by any means reverted to complete chaos. Instead, it has been shattered into units of local orders which conflict among themselves. The extent to which these separated units, as they now exist, are able to live together cooperatively, rather than hostilely, is seriously limited. Therefore, it comes about more often than not, that each single unit is compelled to maintain its individual integrity in the face of an actively hostile environment of other units. Organized parts of our creation are continually coming into conflict with one another, in such wise that if one of them fails to attack and to destroy its neighbor, it will itself be attacked and destroyed.

We may suppose that within a perfected creation, in its un-fallen state, men might have continued as centers of rational living creative order, in complete and balanced control of their environments, for an indefinite period of time. If man is thought of as a rational creative agent, perfectly fulfilling the will of God within His world, accomplishing this mission through a continuously and freely maintained cooperation with that will, it is difficult to see how he could ever fail to be the controlling master of his environment. Perfect man in a

perfect world would, as it were, have perfect command over all the materials of experience and of life, as he continued, in co-operation with God's purpose, to lead those materials progressively from one ordered arrangement to another, playing his appointed rational part in the evolving processes of creation, while age succeeded to age. In an unfallen world, man's environmental materials, the physical and spiritual stuffs, as we might call them, out of which he creates all ordered human achievements both individual and social, could never get the better of his creative power. Like some creative artist, completely in control of his own paints, man would never have lost control of that world which God originally entrusted into his hands.

On the other hand, in the world as it is, man's environment does in the end, always and quite obviously, triumph over him. For a period of years, the material organized body of man both grows, and then, subsequently, maintains itself by creatively appropriating to its own purpose, elements of food and of oxygen gas, which it seizes upon and incorporates out of a relatively disordered environment. No satisfactory explanation has yet been given from any scientific quarter as to why a human body, if it can maintain itself at all in this manner, should not do so for an indefinite length of time. Nevertheless, this is not now the case. After a number of years, which sometimes seem pitifully few, the physical environment always seems to get more and more the control over every individual man. The ability of the body to cope with it becomes weaker and weaker, until at last, even quite apart from what we call disease or accident, external chaos can no longer be controlled at all, and the human body ceases to maintain itself within it. Surrounding chaos intrudes completely. The body loses all creative command and is itself dissolved into utter disorder. The body dies.

It is not only against the intrusion of inanimate physical chaos that the human body, as years go by, may sometimes lose its fight. There are also certain units of living order which often succeed in intruding themselves into the body of man. Such, for example, are disease-causing bacteria. For the most part, a healthy living body can destroy these alien organized

units of its environment, before they gain a secure lodging within it. At other times, bacteria succeed in gaining an entrance, and begin to assert their own material creative powers at the expense of the ordered integrity of the body. The ordering power of the bacteria begins to thwart the creative ordering power of the human organism. The microscopic organisms begin to break down the order of the larger organism, and some kind of illness ensues. Sometimes, even then, a human body succeeds in marshalling a specialized reserve of creative power, which can, in turn, thwart the attack of the bacterial intrusion. The body then recovers. Otherwise, the bacteria get the upper hand, and the body dies. In either event, we see here a clear example of disorder between the creative capacities of human beings and their environment, in which human beings often lose their guiding control. Instead of controlling the natural world, man is controlled and overcome by it. Here is a definite symptom of the disorder of our fallen world.

In a manner analogous to the creative self-maintenance of a human body, every human mind also maintains its peculiar organic structure of concepts, of intellectual values in their rational hierarchy of emphasis, and of emotional attitudes and psychological affections. All these so-called spiritual materials are ordered out of an external environment of ideas, of impressions and of other materials presented to the mind by that environment. Sometimes these materials come to the mind for its creative appropriation almost at random, that is, out of a relatively chaotic source. More often, materials for mental growth are available in organized units, themselves already so ordered that they have no need of being broken down into their elements before the mind can use them. They need only to be somewhat reorganized, or they may be utilized directly as complete, ordered units, as they are appropriated by the mind in question. Thus, a student may find ready to hand complete mathematical theorems, or whole self-consistent philosophical deductions. He has then no need of building up such ordered units for himself, out of their elements. He needs only to appropriate these already existing units of order into the organism of his own mental structure.

Sometimes, however, it happens that certain systems of ideas, certain ordered units of concepts, are present in the environment in such wise that, if appropriated into a particular mind without any change or reorganization, they would be as alien to its structure as are disease bacteria to the structure of a human body. Such alien systems or "complexes" of emotions, of affections, or of ideas, as the case may be, need to be broken down by careful analysis and then creatively reorganized, if their elements are to be of constructive use in the growing human mind. In cases of this kind, the mind usually remains the creative master of the situation. Sometimes, however, it does not. The alien ordered system of ideas gets the better of the mind. It intrudes itself bodily, while retaining its own unbroken order. This leads to a relatively disastrous disorder, within some particular mind, and to a delusion, a fantastic misconception, or to complete insanity. Here again can be observed the triumph of relative chaos in the realm of mind. It is a symptom of a disorder in man's world, which has in some way got away from his control.

At this point, it may be objected that the foregoing kinds of disorders which we have been putting forward as symptoms of the fallenness of our human world are disorders which affect a great deal of the rest of animate creation, quite apart from rational man. Those disorders of our creation, in which man is involved, should, it would appear, be considered in the category of Original Sin only when we can trace them, after the manner of tracing discords in the hypothetical orchestra of our previous analogy, to the dereliction of the human will. On the other hand, we can trace disease and death, present in the animal and vegetable levels of life, far back into a portion of the history of the world evolutionary process, to a time vastly antedating the appearance of man upon the earth. Also, in the competitive life processes of animals and plants, nature seems to have been "red in tooth and claw" for a far greater period than human beings have been present in the world. Lions, or their evolutionary ancestors, doubtless preyed upon lambs, or their ancestors, considerably before man's own ape-like predecessors ever looked upon the sun.

Here is a problem of seemingly profound disorder pervading all creation, and it does not appear possible to trace it to rational man as its source; because the disorder itself, if it really be disorder, actually antedates the creation of man. This difficulty has occupied the minds of many philosophers and theologians. St. Paul seems to feel the burden of the chaos of the whole world, both animate and inanimate, a chaos extending far beyond human life and experience, when he cries out "we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."²⁰ St. Paul may himself have believed that the "redness" of nature's "tooth and claw" was, like the disorder and sin of human life, solely the fruit of man's rational failure. It is impossible for us to hold this view literally, for this would entail the necessity of considering the original failure of man as possessing enormously retroactive consequences, and this would be contrary to everything which we know about time, and about the causality principle.²¹

If then, the whole of non-rational nature really is disordered, as for obvious reasons it has seemed to many to be, but, nevertheless, disordered in ways which are not only difficult, but impossible, to trace to man alone, we are apparently forced to embrace either one of two other solutions.

First, this seeming disorder in the world, apart from man's actual connection with it, may not be a true disorder at all. At any rate, it may not be an evil contrary to the will of God for His creation, in the same sense that it is an evil and a part of Original Sin when we discover this kind of disorder affecting the life of rational man. Or, second, the conflicts between organized units of life, which we now find all about us, are a true disorder of some sort, and are therefore in need of some kind of corresponding redemption. In this case, we have to assume that they were absent from God's perfected creation at its beginning, and, like Original Sin, have been introduced subsequently through some other kind of "fall," cosmic in its scope, which antedates the Fall of Man. At the beginning, then, the conditions described in Isaiah's great prophecy of the redemption of the

²⁰ Rom. 8:22.

²¹ See the *New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, the note on Romans 8:22.

world, may have been normal to all the natural order of creation. The wolf may have dwelt with the lamb, the leopard lying down with the kid, the young lion with the fatling together, the lion eating straw like a bullock, dust being the serpent's meat. And a little child, playing unharmed in the midst of poisonous asps, might have been set to tend and care for all the wild beasts together. In such a world, there was nothing hurt nor destroyed in all God's holy creation.²²

It may be remarked, in passing, that, from the point of view we are now assuming, it does not seem to be quite an utter perfection, that a lion should even eat straw, rather than his present accustomed fatlings. After all, straw and grass are perfectly good examples of order in the natural level, and if it really is a sign of disorder, that units of living order in the lower levels of the hierarchy of our creation should be destroyed to serve the maintenance of those in higher levels, it would have seemed more proper for the lion, like the serpent, to have eaten "dust."

If, at the beginning of creation, all the living units of animate nature had been actually knit together in a perfectly cooperative social whole, in such wise that all trace of mutual destructiveness was absent from their harmonious inter-relationships, we might ourselves expect to find some evidence in the way of relics of this state of affairs still surviving within our present disordered world. As a matter of fact, there are certain co-operative relationships now discoverable among living things, which might conceivably be taken as surviving traces of a cooperative natural order, previously universal in its scope.

For example, certain strains of bacteria not only do not cause disease, but they continue to exist quite peacefully within other organized living bodies. They may even be indispensable to the continuing life-processes of their hosts. Such, for instance, are the cellulose-destroying bacteria in the stomach of a horse, without which no horse could possibly digest his hay. Also, there are nitrogen-fixing bacteria in the nodule roots of the kinds of vegetables called legumes, without which these plants would be unable to appropriate nitrogen from the surrounding air, and to incorporate this chemically very inert gas into the

²² Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25.

proteins which we find in such edible things as peas and beans. Therefore, indirectly, these latter kinds of bacteria cooperate in a beneficial way for the maintenance of human life.

One of the best understood and most familiar examples of orderly cooperative living between widely various units of larger-scale living things, is that presented by the relationships obtaining between certain flowering plants and the insects upon which they have come to depend for their pollination and, therefore, for the propagation of their species. So highly specialized and, at the same time, so subtly adjusted are the processes of seed fertilization through the agency of various insects, that, in a certain sense, the insects and plants involved in these processes would seem to be knit together into one single, social, but, nevertheless, organic structural order.²³ And social order of this kind gives a hint, perhaps, at how such cooperative relationships might conceivably be extended throughout the inter-relationships of all living things.

In addition to these kinds of fragmentary social orders now surviving in the world, there are hints, too, which may be gained from our knowledge of the age-long organic evolutionary process, indicating that disorders and conflicts between living things have, in certain ways at least, tended to grow more, rather than less pronounced, with the passage of time. If this were also proved true, it might be taken as evidence that if we could go sufficiently far back in evolutionary history, we might find ourselves approaching a functional order in creation something akin to that original perfect order of all things, which some theologians believe might have preceded a "cosmic fall" of the world.

As an example of this latter fact, we can cite the observation that pathogenic bacteria, at any rate certain kinds of bacteria which enter organisms through wounds, and thus introduce the disorders of dangerous and destroying infections, apparently did not exist in our world, even as recently, from the evolutionary point of view, as a hundred million or so years ago.

²³ For some further curious and striking examples of these kinds of highly specific, cooperative relationships in our natural order, reference may conveniently be made to several short articles on this subject by E. L. Grant Watson, in the *New Statesman and Nation*, Feb. 16, Mar. 2, Apr. 6, 1935.

Fossil records seem to indicate that at an earlier period of the world's history, wounds, and in particular, fractured bones in the animal order were healed without any signs of bacterial invasion. Here is evidence that the disorder in animate creation—once again, if this really is disorder—has grown worse instead of better, with the process of natural organic evolution of living forms and species, even while the forms and species themselves have been growing more diverse, more highly organized, and more complex.

Another interesting example of the worsening of this kind of natural disorder is the existence of the malaria parasite. There is good evidence that this tiny creature which causes so much havoc in the ordered life of mankind was at one time a free-swimming amoeba, living a harmless, independent life in an environment of water. It has learned, with the passage of ages of time, to enter the organism of a certain kind of mosquito, and through the mosquito to enter the human body, causing the common and deadly malarial disease. Incidentally, this has also introduced a disorder into the life of the mosquito in question, because the latter also dies of the malarial attack, after it has passed the parasite spores on to man. The life cycle which the malaria parasite has now achieved presents to us, when it is considered by itself apart, an example of the most beautiful and complicated living order which one could desire to study. However, this is an order which, with respect to anopheles mosquitoes and to human beings, seems disastrously out of place. Thus does disorder increase in the world as a whole, even while new individual examples of beautiful order themselves increase and multiply. One new order nearly always seems to get in the way of others, new or old, although examples, which also abound, of still surviving mutually cooperative units of order, show that this is, perhaps, not an entirely inevitable thing. Judging by this evidence, disorder may, it would seem, not be embedded in the very substance of animate creation, but may, instead, have been introduced there, subsequent to its beginning.

If the conflicts and mutual destructions present in the animate but non-rational sphere of creation are indeed to be

viewed as true disorders contrary to the will of God, we have to admit that we possess very little light, either through natural reason or from Divine revelation, concerning how they originated. It is hinted, perhaps, by St. Paul²⁴ that they may proceed from something like a fall of angels, previous to the creation of man. This idea of some sort of cosmic disorder, affecting both animate and inanimate creation, before the creation of rational man, is developed at length by the late Dr. Williams in his book about the Fall.²⁵ However, speculations of this kind do not so much seem to account for the disorders which they are attempting to interpret, as they appear merely to restate plain observable facts in allegorical and rather complex terms.

In this present discussion, we have been concerned with Original Sin, defined as a disorder introduced into the corporate and individual lives of rational free beings, through certain perverse, but nevertheless deliberate and free choices which one or more of those same beings have, at some time, made. This disorder has disarrayed the whole of human life, and has enmeshed free man in its own uncontrollable processes. It now cripples his rational existence and tends to destroy him. It is therefore certainly evil, and contrary to the intention of God for His creation. On the other hand, it may be questioned whether all the conflicts discoverable in the rest of nature, apart from man, are themselves actually evil at all. At any rate, they are not evil in the sense that disorders in the relationships of rational creatures must be called evil. Perhaps, therefore, the worst that we can say of the thousandfold seeming conflicts in the non-rational level of animate nature, is that they would be evil if all the creatures concerned in them were rational. Certainly, apart from rational mind, the idea of sin, original or individual, has no meaning. When man preys upon man, the resulting social disorders are sinful. When a hawk preys upon a rabbit, this is certainly not a sin, although some men may

²⁴ Rom. 5:12. St. Paul says: "Through one man sin *entered* the world," which might imply that it did not originate there, but came from some already existing source. This may refer to a Fall more remote than that of man.

²⁵ *Ideas of The Fall and of Original Sin*, N. P. Williams, Bampton Lectures for 1924. London, 1927. For the comment on Rom. 5:12, see p. 162.

maintain that it appears to them to be a strange disorder in nature.²⁶

With our admittedly inadequate knowledge of the whole process of creation and of evolutionary change, we may be tempted, boldly, but doubtless naively, to suggest that we ourselves could imagine an order between even non-rational and non-conscious created units, within which there might exist fewer conflicts and less murderous violence than seem inherent in our present world. Certainly it can be maintained that it would be highly desirable to eliminate sin from the life of man and to restore to the world of human relationships a complete unblemished wholeness, within which murderous human competition would give place to a true, brotherly cooperation; and it appears also that such a re-creation of human life is, at any rate, a conceivable thing. Whether this new perfection can actually be given to man is another question which we must consider separately. There seems, at least, no intrinsic contradiction or absurdity in making the suggestion. On the other hand, to eliminate the conflicts resident in the non-rational world of creation would seem to hold no promise of its improvement, but instead, to make probable its complete annihilation. Human sin and disorder might be done away, to the glory of all humanity and to the furthering of its fullest and finest existence; but to eradicate the "redness" of nature's "tooth and claw," would mean nothing less than the eradication of nature itself. For it is difficult to see how members of the animal and vegetable kingdoms could be made to desist from utilizing one

²⁶ The English, with their notoriously sentimental regard for animals, are apt to feel keenly that the suffering found in the animal world is a grave disorder in nature. Bishop Gore could even say that innocent suffering in the case of animals might be the one thing which could serve as a valid argument against the fact of God's perfect goodness! (e.g., *The Philosophy of the Good Life*, John Murray, London, 1930, p. 336). We must guard ourselves from this kind of exaggeration. We must not permit ourselves to project a rational, human experience of life into the non-rational experience of animals. Just as animals cannot sin, so also they cannot be thought of as suffering as do human beings. Human suffering involves the rational mind. Imagination, fear of the far future, memory of the past, rational understanding of its fuller implications, all contribute to it in the case of mankind, and make it for him what it is. In the non-rational world, nearly all these elements are absent. People of the Latin countries are given to taking a much more realistic view of questions in which animal psychology is involved.

another for food, in order to sustain their mutual existences. It is hard to believe that the hawk could cease to prey upon the rabbit, or, for that matter, that cows could cease to eat grass, unless all such animals, as we know them, were utterly done away with. In particular, the material body of man cannot continue to live without using certain other ordered, living organisms for food.

To do away with this kind of conflict in the natural world would not be to redeem it, but, instead, to destroy it. We may well hesitate to label a given set of relationships "disordered," when to make them "ordered," according to some human notion, would actually completely obliterate all the created things which are so related. Therefore, it may be doubted whether the "redness" inherent in nature should or can be viewed as altogether evil.

In the light of these considerations, we may conclude that the so-called disorders of the animate but non-rational world are not necessarily open to the interpretation that they were originally absent, and that they have been introduced through some kind of "cosmic fall." We may believe, instead, that in the hierarchy of natural created things the members of the lower levels of creation were intended by God to serve the purposes of the members of the higher levels. Therefore, even when creatures of a lower level, whether vegetable or animal, serve as food for creatures at a higher level, we may not criticize this state of affairs as being necessarily contrary to God's original purpose for His created world. It is true that every living unit possesses, as an essential element of its nature, an instinct for maintaining itself in the face of every hostile environmental situation. It is logical, therefore, that living things should defend themselves against every alien encroachment, against any other creature which happens to threaten their integrity, whether this threat comes from above or below them in the hierarchy of creation. And this spirit of resistance, which, under many circumstances brings the life interests of individuals into conflict with the life interests of the hierarchy of all creation, gives rise to the conflicts which the natural world presents for our observation. But in spite of the fact that, as

we have just seen, there are many examples of cooperation resident in creation, along side of examples of conflict, and in spite of the further fact that we can now trace back the organic evolutionary process to a point at which certain present conflicts seem to disappear, nevertheless, the intellectual price which we are compelled to pay for actually labelling these conflicts as utterly contrary to God's purpose within His material world, and therefore, for calling them evil in the sense that sin is evil in the life of man, is too high a price. It would involve, as far as we can see, the elimination of animate creation itself.

However, when disorders of this kind intrude into the individual and social life of man, they assume an entirely different aspect. Rational man does not have to kill rational man in order to exist. He does not even need to gain an individual or group subsistence at the expense of other individuals or groups. His rational nature opens to him the way of escape from this kind of conflict. Therefore, when such conflicts appear in the order of human life, they may indeed be labelled evil, because they are contrary to right reason. Furthermore, this observation doubtless applies to bodily suffering and to physical death, which now intrude upon human beings from the attacks of various units of created order other than man. If man succumbs to the encroachment of his physical environment and dies, as it is said, of "old age," there is excellent reason for believing that this can occur only because man, through sin, has sacrificed the perfection of the ordering power of his rational nature. It is to this that St. Paul seems to refer when he says that "in Adam all die,"²⁷ implying that only man's deliberate disordering of his rational control over the rest of creation has made it possible for the conflicts within the rest of creation to get the better of him.

Likewise, if bacteria can now gain an entrance into human bodies, and can thus cause serious disease or death, there is also good reason for believing that this, too, is because the rational life of man is itself so disordered that this intrusion of relative chaos into his body becomes a possibility.

In passing, it may be said that some of the most interesting

²⁷ I Cor. 15:22.

medical research of our time tends to show how great a difference mental and nervous adjustments, varying in individual men from one occasion to another, may make in their vulnerability to bacterial attack.²⁸ It would seem to be not at all contrary to what we now know of the human mind and of its relationship to the material body, to believe that a perfectly rational man, within a social order also completely rational according to God's will, would be immune from all those seeming disorders which tend to encroach upon him out of the environment of non-rational creation. We have, of course, no reason to believe that the physical organism of the human body, apart from its being informed with a truly rational soul, would itself alone be naturally resistant to the conflicts of the rest of the natural world. But when man was created as true man in the image of God, when God raised him from the level of non-rational creation to his unique, rational and free status, then it became possible for him both to rise above and to command the conflicts of the world around him. Neither inanimate nor animate creation, if man had remained as he was in the beginning, could ever have got the upper hand with him. It was only when he partly relinquished his rational birthright, by reintroducing a *rational* disorder—if this self-contradictory term may be permitted, as signifying that the disorder resulted from rational free choice—into the world, that the material conflicts of man's environment also immediately re-encroached upon him. Disease, suffering and death, dealt to man from out the lower hierarchical levels of creation, thus became a possibility to him. And that disorder which, in the non-rational world, is in itself neither good nor bad, became both evil and sinister when man reopened the gates to it in his own life, after he had once been raised above it, through the bestowal of the power of reason, at the time of what we call the "creation of man."

Another interesting observation may be made concerning the manner in which the ordered units of the lower and non-rational levels of animate creation may properly be sacrificed to the maintenance of human life. On the basis of available evi-

²⁸ In this connection, Dr. H. Flanders Dunbar's *Emotions and Bodily Changes*, Columbia University Press, 1938, may profitably be read.

dence, we have concluded that it is entirely proper, and in accordance with the whole ascending order of God's hierarchical natural world, that certain animals and plants—although, at their proper levels of being, they themselves offer excellent examples of order in their own right—should, nevertheless, be destroyed, in such wise that their content may pass into human bodies, and that their peculiar orders should thus yield to a higher order at the human level of being. As long as man can himself use, creatively and constructively, to a higher purpose, some other created order which, in its own nature, could serve but a humbler purpose, it cannot be considered a fault or disorder within our world that he should so appropriate it.

On the other hand, if units of order on the levels of creation lower than man have to be destroyed, not solely to some positive and creative purpose conformable to the development of all God's creation as a whole, but instead for the negative purpose of removing them from some position of disorder in human life, then their destruction cannot be considered an unmixed good. It is right and permissible, for example, for a potato or a chicken to be appropriated into a human body, that the latter may be nourished and strengthened to perform a work for God, in ways not open to either potatoes or chickens, so long as they remain at their own ordered level of creation. But what of the destruction of, let us say, bacteria, which have invaded a human body and are causing illness? The body must now summon its creative reserve powers and destroy those units of living order which have penetrated into it. However, the body does not do this for the purposes of obtaining food and nourishment. It does it for a negative, not a positive purpose. The bacterial invasion is itself made possible only because of man's partial relinquishment of his rational control over the whole ordered social complex of which he was intended by God to be the creative controlling center. That disease germs can invade a human body is a result of that disorder which comes from rational man's own prior dereliction. It is a result of Original Sin. Therefore, to kill these same bacteria in the interest of recovery from disease, is not to destroy them for a new and progressive creative purpose, but to destroy them to remedy a

disordered situation for which the primary responsibility must be ascribed, not to the bacteria, but to man. The bacteria, excellent created ordered units in their own right, have to be destroyed because man, by a previous dereliction of his will, has opened a way for them to enter his body and there to multiply. In a still perfect creation, with man unweakened in his rational creative control of the processes of all life, bacteria would never have been allowed to enter the human body; the bacteria could never have moved into a situation which is, after all, dangerous to their survival as well as dangerous to man. And man's creative power must now destroy these bacteria to remedy a disorder which is ultimately of his own causing.

We may conclude, therefore, that in cases of this sort when disorders which result from man's dereliction place in jeopardy other units of created order, with risks which the latter need not have run apart from man's own sin, their destruction, under such conditions, cannot be considered entirely in accordance with God's will. Destruction of disease-causing bacteria by a body during an illness, with consequent recovery of the individual in question, can be thought of as only relatively good. It is probably considerably better than the immediate death of some man or woman, but it is not good in a complete sense. For, except for man's sin, such situations as this would never have arisen at all.

It is interesting to recall that some of the greatest Saints have sensed this profound difficulty, in respect to other creatures of this world, when these other creatures have sometimes been causing them great discomfort. St. Francis of Assisi, for example, is said to have refused to kill lice which inhabited his body, saying that these too were God's creatures, and should therefore be allowed to live! Likewise, as we have already noted, mental derangement results from the intrusion of alien ideas and systems of concepts into an order which is being maintained by some particular human mind. These intrusions of unanalyzed bits of order in the spiritual world are analogous to intrusions of disease bacteria into a living body. It is worthy of notice, therefore, that when Our Lord Himself cured the insane, He is recorded as having "cast out devils." It is interesting to consider

the fact that the "devils" were not necessarily destroyed or annihilated. In whatever way we ourselves interpret the actuality back of this idea of "devils," at any rate, they seem to stand for units of order in their own right, and, as such, were not to be obliterated. Instead, they were, it would seem, simply "cast out" or removed from the order of a human mind within which they were relatively chaotic elements. The record of one such case of healing the insane tells us that Our Lord gave permission to certain "devils" to take up their abode in another living environment in which they would be less out of place. He told them to depart into a herd of swine.²⁹ Here they immediately destroyed both the swine and, presumably, themselves. However, Our Lord Himself did not destroy them when He cast them out. Therefore this miracle, the record of which seems to present so many difficulties to the modern mind, as being in some sense "inconsistent" with what is otherwise known about Our Lord, may, as a matter of fact, teach a profound philosophical truth concerning the necessity of always taking into consideration the relative values of all the various ordered units of our creation. It may teach us the desirability of restoring order in creation, when possible, by separating conflicting units of order, rather than by completely destroying either the one or the other party to any given conflict.

Our general conclusion may here be that, in the life of man—enmeshed as he is within the disorder of Original Sin—pain, sickness, insanity and death will be continuing features of the picture of his present existence. Thus these things, too, are earmarks of a fallen world.

²⁹ Mark 5:1-13.

IV

INCARNATION, SALVATION AND THE CHURCH

WE HAVE now to consider the problem of reperfecting, of re-creating, order, in a world which was once created perfect, but which has subsequently lost much of its original order. That is, we have to consider a process which, in theological terms, is called the process of redemption, the process of salvation of a fallen world.

It can be easily seen that the restoration of an original order whose first perfect pattern has been broken presents a somewhat different problem from that of the creation of that order in the beginning, as it was made to emerge from primal chaos. The problem of reperfecting a broken order differs from the problem of that order's first creation, somewhat as the task of the piecing together again of the broken fragments of a shattered work of art presents a different problem from that of its first production. This analogy, however, is inadequate, because a broken work of art, if it be repaired, needs to be, and, indeed, can only be, made to appear as if it had never been broken. Its complete original integrity can never quite be given back to it. On the other hand, to save a fallen world it is necessary to do precisely that, namely, restore it completely to its original integral perfection. The world's restoration must be one not of mere external form only, but of perfected substantial actuality.

In addition, an outstanding characteristic of our present world disorder is that it presents a problem far more difficult than any which a disorder among mere material and inanimate things would present. Our world contains, as its most important elements, men and women who still remain rational human beings. Therefore, they also still retain a potentiality of unhampered creative ordering activity in their own right, although in the world as it is, this freedom, as we have seen, has been much impaired by its misdirection to disordered ends. The restoration of man's rational freedom to its proper completeness, and the

redirection of this freedom to its proper ends, present a complex difficulty which could not arise in any solely material disorder. It is, however, in the case of our actual world, the primary and fundamental problem. Upon its solution depends not only man's own salvation, but also that of the created world order as a whole.

It follows, therefore, that although the restoration of the fallen world must certainly be a creative act, in the sense that a new integral order must again be perfected out of present disarray, nevertheless it must, at the same time, be an act which takes account of the foregoing considerations. In particular, the re-creation of the world must guard the integrity of man's rational freedom. It will, therefore, have to be accomplished by a somewhat different method. Some kind of attack upon our present disorder will have to be devised which shall differ essentially from that kind of creative action which we can think of as appropriate or adequate to the first perfecting of an ordered physical world out of the complete chaos of primal matter.

It would seem that an inanimate chaos could be attacked by a transcendent organizing power in a perfectly arbitrary and overruling manner, without incurring any danger whatever of damaging or doing violence to some element within that chaos, some element which in itself might already have possessed a certain value of its own, and which it was desirable neither to lessen nor to destroy. The reason for this is that primal chaos possessed no such elements of value at all. In fact, by definition, primal chaos contained no ordered elements whatever, but only a potentiality for being ordered into some kind of cosmos or created order.

It follows, therefore, that, in the beginning, the creative ordering power of God, in acting upon primal matter as its foundation for the creation of an ordered universe, had no need to "tread carefully," as it were, lest in calling forth order out of complete disorder some already existing, valuable element might, in that process, be suppressed or lost. No such valuable things were originally present. Chaos, having no ordered values whatever of its own to lose, and everything to gain in being ordered, lent itself with complete passivity to being moulded or

formed into an ordered world by the absolute imposition upon it of the overruling intelligence and the dictating will of God.

On the other hand, that disorder of the world which we now experience presents a very different picture from that of primal chaos. Here there are a great many partial elements of order, which, in any restoration of a complete, integral order to the whole world, must be preserved. There are already existing elements of our world, disordered as the latter is, which could not be destroyed without very grave or even fatal loss. Above all, the world now contains men and women who themselves possess a certain rational, free creative power, the annihilation of which would be much too great a price to pay, even for the restoration of some kind of perfection to all the rest of creation. It is primarily this latter fact which now inhibits the arbitrary and overruling imposition of God's own omnipotent, creative will, as He seeks the restoration of the perfection of His entire creation. To use again our previous expression, under these present conditions, in distinction from the conditions presented by primal chaos, it is now exceedingly necessary to "tread carefully" during the execution of any plan for the re-creation of the world.

It should be clear to us, therefore, that in the intelligent creative work of restoring complete order to the world, man, if he is to be allowed to remain human, in the sense of being rational and free, must be permitted to have his allotted part according to his rational capacities. Man, who, within an ordered world itself originally perfect, was intended to exercise to the full his intelligent capacity for maintaining that perfection as the processes of history were to develop and unfold, must, even now, be permitted to continue to exercise that same human, creative capacity in the restoration of creation's order, now that this order has been partly lost. He must not be arbitrarily "shoved around," or "put in his place," during the process of the re-creation of the world. Even though it be man's own responsibility that disorder is now present with us in our world, and even though he has deliberately involved himself in that same disorder, both with respect to his individual as well as his social life, his remaining free powers, such as they are, must, nevertheless, still be employed in the process of restoring our lost order.

For if man's finite will were ever to be completely overruled and dominated, to the extent of being supplanted by some outside force of whatever nature, he would then cease to be human, because he would cease to be rational and free. Obviously, to speak of the restoration of world order by any method which would at the same time destroy humanity, would be to speak in self-contradictory terms. We have, therefore, to seek a solution for the problem of how a fallen world may be reperfected, in such wise that man, who is responsible for the whole tragic situation of present disorder, may still be used, in some sense, at least, as a free creative agent in the work of restoring order to that very world which he himself has caused to fall.

It can be quite easily seen that, in the solution of this problem as far as man is concerned, there is still a good deal to build upon. For one thing, he has not lost the light of his natural reason. He can still act rationally. Furthermore, man has never been entirely cut off from intercourse with God. He has ever retained something of his intuition for the good, the beautiful and the true. He has by no means lost his moral and aesthetic senses, and he still retains a great capacity for true knowledge and rational understanding of reality.

Man's difficulty seems to be, not that he has completely lost these typically human capacities, but that, under many circumstances and in many situations which now confront him, both his natural knowledge and his understanding of God's will are dimmed and confused. This would, in fact, be one logical result of his existence within that partial chaos in which he finds himself. Within a partial chaos, no human choice and no human action, as we have already seen, can ever quite achieve God's will in an absolute sense, because nothing can be absolutely perfect in the midst of a world in which, considered as a whole, some imperfection still persists. Therefore, man's choices of action can, in any case, never be entirely satisfactory either to his reason or to his conscience. And the reason for this is that no matter how clearly man may see God's will he finds that he can follow it in practice only in a sense of more or less, and never perfectly. This state of affairs leads inevitably to feelings of frustration; and such feelings tend, in turn, to dull the wills,

and to discourage the finest impulses, of even the best of men. For, among many possible choices, all of which are seen to be far from perfect, men often turn to some merely convenient or immediately satisfactory course of action, instead of to some other course of a theoretically superior quality, but whose superiority is not felt to compensate either for its greater inconvenience, or for its immediate unsatisfactoriness.

It might seem, in the light of these considerations, that what man chiefly needs, in his bewilderment, is clearer enlightenment as to God's will, and, in his discouragement and apathy, encouragement or increased motivation to better performance. With a clearer lead and a clearer vision of the possibilities of what he might accomplish in the matter of restoring order to his world, would not man be already well on the way to being able to use his free creative powers to that end? The answer to this is that the sages, philosophers and religious Prophets throughout the ages have served man in precisely this way. Under the guidance of God Himself, as we believe, they have revealed God's will, and have announced and reannounced His purposes for the ordering of human life. In addition, the Prophets have stimulated man to act in accordance with their pronouncements, have threatened him with that disaster which must surely follow upon failure to do so; and they have held out glorious visions of accomplishment and of reward, if he would but recall himself to those ways of God which they have pointed out.

Under this kind of leadership and Prophetic impulse much good has been accomplished. However, nothing can be clearer than that very little, if any, progress has been made toward the restoration of an ordered perfection to the world considered as an integral whole. Local and sporadic achievements in the direction of order have always been, and still are, balanced by an increasing disorder in some neighboring place or at some subsequent time. Even man's greatly increased creative control over his material environment, and his mastery of matter and energy, as he orders these things into machines and working appliances in innumerable variety, get perverted to a notable degree by the wide use of many machines to ends of increased disorder, rather than to the end of order in the world.

By this time we should be able to see the reason for this failure, and also why failure must always remain inevitable. For, as has already been pointed out, every creative act of man must now be carried out in the midst of an environmental disorder in which he himself is intrinsically involved. This fact, which is called the fact of Original Sin, brings into conflict with much of the rest of the world as it actually is, even those new elements of fresh order which man may succeed in creating. That is, even an area or focus of perfected order, newly realized in the midst of surrounding disorder, although it may be perfected within itself, is always discovered to be disordered, relative to its still unaltered environment. Man makes the tragic discovery that, although as a free creative agent he was given, in the beginning, a sufficient capacity to *maintain* the perfection of an ordered world, nevertheless this original creative capacity is not now sufficient to meet the demands of an attempt to *restore* this world order, now that it has been lost. Man, in the beginning, was given a natural grace, as it is called, sufficient, if he so willed, to keep himself perfect within a perfected creation. He still retains this same natural grace, but something far more than this is now needed for the restoration of a fallen world to its primitive, ordered state. Man's creative natural grace must still be fully exercised; but, in addition, for the salvation of the world, the creative power of God Himself must be invoked anew.

The response to this need is given in the Incarnation of God in the Man Jesus, who is called the Christ.¹ The Catholic Dogma of the Incarnation presents to us the method whereby God has redeemed, and does redeem, a disordered and imperfect world, as an integral whole, into a new order and a perfection conformable to His will. It is in the Incarnation that man, too, is restored within this new perfection, without himself being forcibly overruled, and without suffering the loss of the dignity of that rational, creative freedom which by nature is already his. Thus, it is in the Incarnation that God re-creates His first creation; and it is only in the light of this fact that there can be fully understood the mission and the activity of the Catholic Church, visible within the world.

¹ *I.e.*, "The Anointed."

It is precisely the same creative power of God which first brought the ordered world out of chaos which now accomplishes the redemption of that world from its present disorder. On this occasion, however, this re-ordering process is accomplished by the emergence within creation of God Himself. God does not now descend upon our fallen world, from out a transcendent level, to set it right again. Instead of this, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity clothes Himself with flesh. To understand how this is possible, it is necessary again to emphasize to ourselves the fact that our world, in its beginning, reflected in a created order the perfection of its Maker. It also contained an order of free human beings who, made in the image of God, also reflected, according to their finite capacities, the Divine Mind. For these reasons, therefore, it was a world with whose created materials God might indeed, at the beginning, have clothed Himself as with a garment. Also, we have to remember that these same created world-materials have not by any means been completely destroyed by the fall of that world. They have instead become merely disorganized and disarrayed. Therefore, God can still clothe Himself with the elements of His creation; and this is the very method which He now adopts, of bringing them again into that order which He had first intended for them, and which had subsequently been lost.

He begins this process at a certain point in history, at an appropriate place and time. The Incarnation is initiated by the action of the Divine Logos, first of all, through the taking of physical matter into Himself. He forms about Himself, as the organ of His Self-expression within creation, a human body. This body was taken from the flesh and blood of a human mother, a Jewish maiden named Mary, living in Nazareth of Galilee, two thousand years ago. It is very significant that God initiates His process of re-ordering the world, on the level of what we call *matter*. The Process of the Incarnation, that is, of re-creation of the world, begins logically, as did the first creation, within the material world. Only later does this Process extend itself into the levels of mind and spirit. Thus, the Catholic Religion, as the Religion of the Incarnation, is, in a sense, rooted in a proper and thoroughgoing materialism; for the method of the

Incarnation demonstrates to us that the necessary and prerequisite foundation for all intellectual and spiritual order is, so far as this world is concerned, the development of an organized material body.

The initiative for the Incarnation is therefore taken by God Himself, as He responds to man's need for a method whereby the order of the world may be restored. But this method, nevertheless, is such that the rational freedom of man is not thereby overruled. In the account of the Annunciation given by Luke the Evangelist,² the Angel Gabriel was sent from God to a Virgin whose name was Mary, to give her the almost overpowering news that she was to become the Mother of the Son of God.³ We may observe, however, that there is no peremptory command given to her. Instead, when she herself remains "greatly troubled," and wonders how this thing shall be, she is met with words of reassurance which have almost a persuasive quality. The Angel of God waits for the *freely given consent* of her who is to be the human Mother of Almighty God! At this awful moment, it would seem, the fate of the universe trembled in the balance of a free, human decision. All creation waited, as it were, with bated breath; for upon Our Lady's consent to her future part in the Incarnation hung the fate of the whole world. It is cause for eternal gratitude to her from all the human race that she did so consent. She freely chose to unite her will completely with the will of God, holding nothing whatever back for herself. She made a choice, honorable above all other human choices, either before or after. For, in her reply, with perfect self-abnegation, she courageously broke ground for all succeeding, free human contributions to the Redemption Process: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

Thus does God begin the refection of the order of the material world, by uniting a portion of it to Himself. A portion of the random and disorganized matter of this world was the first thing organized into the Divine Perfection, now manifested in the perfection of the individual body of the Incarnate Son of

² Luke 1:26-38.

³ Verse 35.

God. The initial, material content of this body is taken first from the body of a woman. Our Lord is then born, He grows and matures. He eats and drinks and breathes as any other man, thus extending the process begun in the womb of His Mother, so that this comes to embrace more and more of His material environment. He perfects a human body, the material organ of a perfect human life. More than this, He increases, as we are told,⁴ in wisdom as well as in stature. He takes to Himself, as His body develops, a human mind, a human will, human emotions, human knowledge. The Divine Logos seizes not only upon the matter of His world, but also upon the knowledge and the ideas of His human social environment. This newly appearing creative power of God extends its scope, from its initial action upon material disorder, to a re-ordering action among the random, disordered elements of the psychological equipment of man. The Divine Wisdom begins to organize itself, according to its Perfection, in the mind of the Man Jesus. God clothes Himself not only with human flesh, but with a human mind. In short, He orders anew into Himself a perfected human nature.

He used as the materials of this newly perfected humanity of His—the “raw” materials, as it were—precisely those elements of human nature which, in their *disorder*, were available to every one of His contemporaries, and which are still available to every man and woman in the world today, because they are the materials of our natural human inheritance. Therefore, the difference which separated Our Lord, as an individual human being, from other men, was not an addition of new and strange elements to the *content* of His human nature. On the contrary, this content—physical, intellectual, emotional—was neither greater nor better than the content which might have been available to any other man of His time. Our Lord's individual uniqueness consisted in His perfect *ordering* of this content, in every feature and detail. For, having secured, in the person of His Mother, the free assent of mankind to His redeeming initiative, He united the natural grace of man to His transcendent, Divine creative power, and He was thus able to

⁴ Luke 2:40.

begin in His own Person that restoration of a world order for which the unaided natural grace of man alone must forever have remained inadequate. And so by this "taking of manhood into God," as the Athanasian Creed phrases it, there was established a center of perfect order, a focus of reperfected creation, which now began to emerge, to bud, as it were, within the surrounding disorder of a fallen world.

The creative Process of the Incarnation continued to spread outward, having Our Lord's Person as its vital center. No more than any other man did He remain an isolated, non-social individual. On the contrary, He showed Himself to be an intensely social Person. He moved among the multitudes, and concerned Himself with large numbers of people, in intimate and very personal ways. Furthermore, as we have already noted, the special emphasis of His whole ministry seems to have been laid upon consolidating a small social group of specially picked people about Himself as their center and their Head. It is a very striking fact that in contrast with many other religious leaders and prophets, He wrote no book. He proclaimed no new detailed moral code, no complicated laws of ritual observance. On the contrary, the roots of most of His ethical teachings can be found in writings and sayings of men who are sometimes centuries prior to Himself. He was, before all else, a Founder⁵ of a New Society of men and women. And the reason for this is to be found in His concern that the Divine, ordering creative power of the Incarnation should be caused to transgress the limits of His own Person, and so be made to extend itself into social relationships. Such relationships, initiated among His immediate, chosen companions, were thus endowed by Him with a potentiality for a special and uniquely perfected social order. We discern, in this social activity, how the Incarnate Logos begins to receive, in addition to the materials already appropriated into His individual Person, human social relationships, also appropriated out of the disorders of a fallen environment, but now, likewise appropriated into His more widely extending perfection. It is, therefore, in this little group of men and women

⁵ This has been pointed out by many commentators. In this connection see Bishop Gore's *Philosophy of the Good Life*, London, 1930, p. 174, note.

that we can discern the embryonic social organism of the Catholic Church.

Here, once again, as the Incarnation spreads into social life among men and women, there is still no forced, compulsive overruling of individual human wills. In the case of every individual who is willing to relinquish his position among the disorders of the world, with the intention of becoming a part of the newly forming re-created social organism of Our Lord's Community, a rational, free assent is a preliminary essential. Such an assent is a primary requirement, just as the Blessed Virgin's free assent to the giving of her own body as the Bearer of the Incarnate Word was a first necessity, before the new creative work of the Incarnation could even so much as begin. But it is important to bear in mind, at the same time, that this rational, free assent of man is only this preliminary condition, and nothing more. Man alone does not contribute the fullness of that creative power which then makes him a new element in the re-ordered life into which he is subsequently incorporated. That power is the same creative power of God which first called cosmos out of chaos, and which must now re-create this cosmos, since it is fallen into a disorder hopelessly resistant to all merely human attack. Therefore, it should be clear to us that the little social group which began long ago to gather about Our Lord had something much more in its corporate makeup than does any ordinary group of human beings, gathered around some great leader or teacher. The new social order, appearing at that time, must not be thought of as something which could *result from* the mere coming together of a few Divinely inspired people, stimulated to a new and beautiful corporate consciousness as they followed a great Teacher sent from God. In this instance, the Leader and Teacher, having won the consent of His followers, was actually bestowing upon them, in addition to anything they could themselves alone achieve, His potentiality for a new ordered social perfection, His vital principle of Divine social life, to re-create a fallen world.

This was a free gift from God. Our Lord was choosing to do a thing quite beyond any human creative power, quite beyond any merely human merit or deserving. On one occasion, to

those disciples who had been the first to put themselves at His disposal, He hinted at this latter fact when He said to them: "Ye are my friends," adding, as if for the sake of perfect clarity, "Ye have not chosen me, *I have chosen you.*"⁶ Thus were these disciples men who were gathered in. As they gave their permission, they were seized upon by the power of the Divine Logos, now extending His re-creative work of the Incarnation outward into the social world of men. Here, then, we see God beginning to clothe Himself in flesh, beyond His own individual body and beyond His own individual human nature, with the flesh and blood of all humanity, redeeming a fallen world as a social whole, into His own perfection, by taking that world organically into His very Self.

At this point, almost at the risk of a seeming triviality, we may adopt a very homely analogy for this process of world redemption by the Process of the Incarnation. It is an analogy which is certainly not intended to be frivolous, although it is commonplace, and inadequate in many respects. It is far from complete; but it will, for all this, serve usefully to illustrate the questions we have just been discussing. That fact alone must serve as an excuse for introducing it in so solemn a context.

Those of us who are familiar with the process of making ordinary mayonnaise salad dressing know that this is prepared by adding flavoring materials, salt, mustard, and so on, to one or more raw egg yolks. Into these yolks, so prepared, there is now stirred, at first almost drop by drop, and then more rapidly, pure olive oil. As the oil is added, the yolks are continually stirred. In this process, the added oil is blended into the mixture, until a creamy, homogeneous and well-flavored salad dressing results. Now such a dressing, something like a slightly jellied cream, is a newly ordered, material entity which has been created from other, separate, primary materials—the oil, the egg yolks and the spices. We may compare this order of the finished dressing to the order of the newly created world.

Every cook knows, however, that on some occasions, and for no very discernible reason, in the process which gives us our present analogy, something disastrous happens to even very care-

⁶ John 15:16.

fully prepared mayonnaise. Sometimes, when it is only partly made, and sometimes, after it is quite completed, it suddenly loses all its homogeneous, creamy character. It "separates." All at once the blended order of the salad dressing is broken. The oil comes out of its mixture and reappears in separate globules. The egg yolks, containing most of the flavoring materials, may once more be seen separately, in streaks and droplets, quite unblended with the oil. This breaking apart of the dressing may be compared to the fall of our natural creation. Its excellent constituent materials are still present. Apparently, these remain quite as they were in their original, individual existences. Now, however, instead of remaining blended as a single new order, they all at once withdraw themselves into separate, uncooperative existences, making an untempting and, from the point of view of palatable salad dressing, a useless, chaotic mixture.

It happens that this analogy, of the behavior of a separated salad dressing with that of a fallen world, may be pushed still further. Every maker of mayonnaise knows an additional very striking characteristic of this kind of egg-and-oil-chaos into which a salad dressing sometimes "falls." He knows that no amount of mere stirring will ever make it come together again, or cause it to regain its former, homogeneous quality. This latter fact seems doubly strange, when we realize that, after their separation, the original material ingredients of the mayonnaise are still quite as good as they ever were. The oil and the egg yolks have merely relapsed into their former condition. They have undergone no other change. In themselves, they are neither spoiled nor altered. They are, it would appear, merely irreversibly disordered, thrown out of that harmonious and cooperative relationship which had formerly been given to them in the single order of the mayonnaise. If simple stirring will not restore this order, the question arises, how may this be done?

Fortunately, here too, every cook can supply the answer. Obviously, the method is not to continue stirring the separated mixture, because this accomplishes nothing. One might conclude that a fresh center or focus of order must be supplied from outside. This is, in fact, precisely what is required. One takes a fresh egg yolk in another dish, and slowly, bit by bit,

stirs the separated dressing into this. The mixture of oil, egg yolks and flavoring materials of the separated, or "fallen," dressing, now newly blend as they are incorporated into the new yolk. A new, re-created order of a restored salad dressing results. We should also notice the interesting and important fact that, so far as one may judge, a single new egg yolk might, in this way, be made to take into its own unspoiled order an unlimited quantity of separated salad dressing. This shows clearly that the latter chaotic mixture has no need of additional constituent materials. It has need only of a new focus or center of order, into which it may be incorporated. In actual practice, even a tiny portion of a new egg yolk would suffice for this purpose. Here is an excellent example of the taking of a material disorder into a new material order, and thus, of redeeming it. From the point of view of these considerations, a separated mayonnaise dressing can, in an exceedingly profound sense of the word, be "saved."

The foregoing analogy is, of course, inadequate and oversimplified. For one thing, it is solely a material analogy, and therefore seems mechanical; whereas, in a fallen world, we have to deal with conscious beings and, as has been pointed out, with the added complications of the presence of free rational human minds which, during any redemption process suitable to our world, have to be kept free. Furthermore, our own focus of order in the Incarnation is not a portion of inanimate matter, but, rather, the Divine creative power of God working positively upon the world from within the latter's disorder, in the Person of His Son. Here the Divine Logos takes a creative initiative of which no material analogy can convey an adequate idea. However, if this analogy illustrates the quality of the process involved in world redemption, we are justified in using it. It may hint to us how the Process of the Incarnation will involve the incorporation of a disordered creation into the order of God's own Being. The profounder and more complicated issues at stake in the restoration of our world remain still to be considered.

As a matter of fact, Our Lord Himself used a much more adequate analogy, in describing His relationship to the world in

general and to His disciples in particular, when He compared Himself, together with His Church, to a vine with its branches. "I am the vine," He said. "Ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit."⁷ We may permit ourselves to extend this analogy.

A grape vine, set in the fertile soil of a vineyard, by virtue of a creative, ordering potentiality with which it is endowed as a natural living organism, incorporates into its structure as it grows, mineral salts and water, from the soil in which it is rooted, and carbon, from the carbon dioxide gas of the air into which it puts forth its green leaves. Out of these and other materials which, as they exist in the earth and air, are relatively chaotic, having no living or organic relationship among themselves, the vine succeeds in forming an harmonious, organically functioning, living thing. Now this grape vine is, first of all, a figure of Our Lord Himself, and, after Him and knit together with Him, a figure of that social extension of His Incarnation which is the Catholic Church.

The soil, in which Our Lord's Incarnate Life grows organically, is the disorganized and fallen world. As we have already noted, it may often prove to be a soil full of excellent materials which are well adapted to the nurture of this New Life. The soil, in fact, is composed of all the human lives of the world, with all their internal and external, their individual and social relationships and experiences. But, just as no atoms of carbon, of hydrogen or of phosphorus, present in some vineyard soil, can, solely by taking thought together, combine to form a living, growing grapevine, so also, none of the scattered materials of human nature and of human life, as these now exist in the atomistic, contending disorders of a fallen world, can achieve unaided the organic, functional structure of the Incarnate Life. To initiate the growth of a grape vine, there must be planted a seed or scion from some other vine. This alone will possess that principle of life and growth which has the power of seizing upon and appropriating the disordered materials of the soil into its own new order. So likewise, in order that the chaos of the fallen world shall be once more ordered according to the Divine

⁷ John 15:1, 5.

intention, there must appear within it a center of the Divine Life, the Logos Incarnate, thus enabling individual human beings to be ordered into His spreading, corporate perfection. If we abide in Him, and only if we do, shall we "bear much fruit." Without Him, as He said, we can, quite literally, do *nothing*.⁸

Obviously, however, as rational human beings within a fallen and disordered creation, men are very inadequately likened to particles of an inert soil in which some vine may grow. That is the point at which even this analogy of Our Lord's breaks down, if we try to push it too far. For men and women, everywhere and always, have been and still are, in some sense, led and illuminated by the Holy Spirit to do God's will. They are rational. They retain at least a measure of the natural, free creative power which was their human endowment in an un-fallen world. Therefore, they continue to possess a certain capacity for being used by God as creative agents for the improvement of that disordered world environment within which the Incarnation Process is about to grow, even while they themselves may still remain outside that Process. Therefore, whether or not they are yet within the Incarnation Process, God can work through all men and women for the improvement of that soil in which the creative Life of that Process is later destined to spread. "My Father is the husbandman," said Our Lord,⁹ in connection with His own analogy of the vine. And husbandry includes not only tending vines, but also working and improving their surrounding soil.

This latter point is very important, because it is clear that human beings must never abdicate their own free, rational natures, to permit themselves, passively and without cooperation on their own parts, to be incorporated into the re-created Order of the Incarnation, after the manner in which inert atoms of carbon or phosphorus are seized upon by a growing vine. It follows that, as men and women enter the Incarnate Order, two requirements are presupposed, two conditions must first be fulfilled.

⁸ John 15:5. This means, of course, "nothing" in respect to the formation of the living Organism of the Incarnation.

⁹ John 15:1.

One of these conditions has already been emphasized. Whoever would lend himself to the purposes of Our Lord's re-creative Process in the world must first give himself freely and of his own choice to this work. A second condition, unfortunately, gets a great deal less emphasis than it should. It rests on the fact that the creative power of the Divine Logos will, as the social Order of His Incarnation develops and spreads, utilize in general only those people who, even in the fallen world, are ready to use their own natural, rational creative powers to the utmost. The Divine Order takes into its Life-Process those who are, in their own right, themselves willing to strive, by God's prior grace and the strengthening help of His Holy Spirit already present in the world, to make the disorder of this world into something at least a little less disordered, something at least a little more tractable, for its further appropriation into the Order of the Incarnation. In other words, in the figure of our analogy, the Vine lays down a condition to the soil. This condition is that the soil, which includes all the world, made up as it is of free, rational, although disordered human elements, shall itself do everything possible to improve its own quality, as a prerequisite of being appropriated into the Vine. "Without me ye can do nothing," said Our Lord to all of us, and that is certainly true in the sense that no one can achieve functional incorporation into the Vine, unless the Vine first moves to take him into its Life-Process. But this living order of the growing Vine will not be extended to men and women automatically or inevitably, if they, for their parts, do no more than passively await that consummation. Even in the world of their disorder, all human beings have been left with both sufficient grace and guidance for much essential, preliminary work. Our Lord's Incarnation will not spread to men and women in the face of their own obvious complacency before dreadful abuses and violent evils, antecedently remediable disorders, existing in the soil of the world. The Divine Vine will not flourish in the face of voluntary human neglect, or indifference to evils for whose correction God, as "Husbandman," quite apart from the Incarnation, already supplies both knowledge and creative capacity. It is expected, indeed, it is demanded, that men and

women shall cooperate in making the natural soil of their common life as fertile as possible for the growth of the Incarnation's supernatural Organism. Wilfully indifferent or hostile elements in the world may, if they so determine, remain permanently outside the New Creation of the Incarnation Process. And in addition, those who pretend to enter this New Order, sharing nominally in its Divine Fellowship while at the same time complacently refusing all cooperative effort within their world environment, are in an equal, if not a greater, danger of being rejected and cast out by Our Lord.

It is, of course, known to all men that God, unlike a human husbandman, is able to work miracles of grace, raising up lovely, individual, human flowers of re-created and perfected life, in the midst of the most unlikely and unpromising environments. Such are the Saints, men and women of heroic spiritual beauty who rise like white and perfumed water lilies out of the black and oozing mire. Indeed, in so far as the Church herself, as bearer of the Divine Life, possesses any of her Lord's perfection, this possession, too, must be viewed as something quite beyond the power of merely human accomplishment. The Order of the Incarnation is always a kind of miraculous gift to mankind. It has to be continually rebestowed upon men, since it is something far transcending the very highest fruits of any human striving. Therefore, no mere improvement of the world environment can ever be thought of as anything approaching a substitute for the spreading of the Incarnate Life. None the less, if Our Lord's analogy of the Vine and branches is to be adequately understood, it must be emphasized that, in Our Lord's continuing creative action among us, He may not be thought of as willing to perfect within His Church either our individual or our corporate lives so long as we, for our parts, show ourselves indifferent to the world environment, whose materials He must use as the content of that Order which, as it is in turn formed, He rebestows upon us. God, through His Incarnate Son, does, of course, cover and repair our actual, human failures and our genuine inadequacies. This is a merciful action which is part of what is called His Atonement. However, this Atonement does not cover our deliberate neglect, while our

neglect remains deliberate. Just as no one would be so foolish as to invoke a miracle to produce abundant grapes upon a vine deliberately planted in a mixture of dry sand and salt, so too no miracle of grace can be counted upon to perfect a Church which wilfully neglects the world environment in which she grows. As if to amaze and to shame the Church into environmental action, Our Lord does sometimes raise up individual Saints even in the face of such neglect. However, it is an arrogant presumption if the Church dares to demand or to expect such miracles, as if they were hers by right. They most emphatically are not. Yet this, unfortunately, is a fact which many Christians, in all ages, have seemed dangerously apt to disregard or to forget.

We are now in a position to see that Catholic Christians have a twofold activity, a twofold task, to fulfil. First of all, by a continuing rededication of their wills to Our Lord, they must place themselves at His complete disposal, in order that He may not only incorporate them, but also keep them, within the social Organism of His Incarnation, as this seeks to spread outward, re-creating and re-ordering the disorder of the fallen world. In this process they themselves will be "saved," in so far as they do really both become, and remain, functional, organically incorporated members within Our Lord's ever widening and redeeming Church. In this way they become branches of that Vine which seeks to take into itself the environment of God's disordered creation. It is thus that they begin to abide in Our Lord, and He to abide in them. It is thus that Our Lord begins to form them into a corporate instrument adapted to the uses of His New Creation. It is thus that the social Organism of the Incarnation, that vital nucleus or center of a re-emerging Divine Order which is the Catholic Church, can become a visible actuality, living and growing in the midst of human disarray.

It follows that doing one's individual part in all that is required for remaining personally within the Incarnation, is every Catholic's most central and most important duty. For it is only in so far as a redeeming focus of visible order, centering in Our Lord's humanity, is extended into a social realization in the world, that the living Organ of Our Lord's redeeming action

becomes an efficient actuality. Without the existence of this living center, the redemption of the world, according to the Catholic view of the Incarnation, is completely unthinkable. As we shall presently see more fully, this is a task which requires, from every individual Catholic, private prayer and a conscious, intelligent effort to live a personal life of recollection and companionship with Our Lord Himself. It also requires a faithful and regular participation in those corporate acts of Our Lord's Church which are specifically religious, in her peculiar and essential functions of worship, of Sacrament and of Common Prayer.

In addition to the foregoing primary activity which is peculiar to the growth of the Body of the Incarnate Life, Catholics have also to work within the still unredeemed, or only partly redeemed, world of the Church's environment, to improve the latter as much as may be before its complete appropriation into the Incarnation Process. This is the second part of the Catholic task. And in this, faithful Catholics not only may, but should, try to join their efforts with those of all other men and women of good will, whether these collaborators be Christian or not. All Catholics must work to prepare, in the world environment, the kind of materials upon which the Divine Life of the Incarnation may most meetly be nourished and enabled most easily to spread abroad. This also is a very manifold activity.

For one thing, in this second part of their work, Catholics should not hesitate to cooperate, in every possible manner, with all secular forces which they judge to be moving toward an order in the relationships and institutions of secular affairs more appropriate to the purposes of a further Divine ordering. For example, whatever social forces would seem, in principle, to hold a promise of more cooperative human living, or whatever proposals for world economic reorganization would seem to hold out hope of making wars less probable, to such secular movements a Catholic should give his unstinted support. For it should be clear to any thoughtful person that men and women forced into savage economic competition or into murderous wars, are men and women very difficult to bring further into the Order of the Incarnation.

It would also seem that intelligent and discerning Catholics should study to cooperate in many circumstances with people who are not only indifferent to Our Lord, but who may even be avowed enemies of all religion. Sometimes, well-informed Catholics may recognize such people to be, so far as their immediate social and economic objectives are concerned, blind friends of that very Catholicism which they now, for the time being at least, deny. In situations of this kind, Catholics should be willing, with all humility, and with a cheerful submission to what may be interpreted as a richly deserved punishment for their own lamentable shortcomings, to suffer denials of their own deepest beliefs on the part of their secular collaborators. They should even put up graciously with suspicion, and if necessary, suffer persecution, without withdrawing their own help so long as they can continue to give it. They are well able to do this, because they see both more clearly and much farther ahead than those who now tend, perhaps, both to scoff at, and to repel them.

These considerations apply, particularly at this time, to the possibility of Catholic cooperation with many contemporary Socialist and Communist movements of our modern world. A good many secular leaders believe very sincerely that a Communist economy, with the ownership of our industrial means of production removed from private ownership and restored to the entire community, would greatly improve the material and general cultural welfare of the masses of mankind. If this is true—and there are cogent arguments for believing it—the Communist plan, at least in its economic aspect, is one which should enlist the sympathy of Catholics. It is a plan which would tend toward the improvement of the soil of our world.

It happens, unfortunately, that Communists are, at the same time, among the most emphatic of all those modern humanists who deny the validity of all religious belief in general, and of Catholicism in particular. Nevertheless, if they now constitute a genuine political and social power which moves toward an immediate, material end desirable from a Christian point of view, Catholics should not refuse to recognize the good which Communists might accomplish, simply because they happen to

deny the reality of that which Catholics hold to be man's true final end. It is the fault of Catholics themselves that secular humanists have come to identify the profession of Christianity with social reaction, economic injustice, and an indifference to the material welfare of the masses of men. It is the fault of Catholics that humanists would make man alone, rather than God, man's own final end.

In this connection, Catholics may recall a little allegory of Our Lord's. "A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he repented and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir': and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father?" The answer is, of course, the first.¹⁰ The application of this story is too obvious for comment. It is clear from it that God may indeed work through those who, for a time, deny Him. Catholics have too often been found in the category of those who give to God the obedience of their lips, but refuse to do His work. To such Our Lord may well be found saying, if we may venture to give His ancient words to the Jews a modern cast: "The Communists and secular humanists go into the Kingdom of God before you."¹¹

But Catholics should not be permanently content merely to collaborate with whatever appropriate changes happen to be taking place within their environment, while leaving it to seculars or non-believers to lead the way in that part of their work. It has frankly to be admitted that Catholics, to their shame, have let this kind of leadership lapse to others. Worse still, not only have Catholics not led, but they have been found opposing the very changes they should themselves espouse. At this very time, many, if not most of them, may even

¹⁰ Matt. 21:28-31.

¹¹ Our Lord's words, reported by Matthew, are: "Verily I say unto you, the publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you." Every age has its own peculiar "untouchables." In Our Lord's day these were the publicans and harlots. It has become respectable to do rescue work among harlots, and the publicans are our most respected members of society. Our untouchables, on the other hand, are the kinds of people mentioned in the text.

be found working with social and political movements which will, almost certainly, cause future history to judge them as traitors to their Lord. The reasons for these sad facts we shall have occasion to discuss. Nevertheless, it is not yet too late for Catholics of understanding, integrity and fearlessness, to come forward as penitents, and thus to become true leaders in world movements for human economic and political freedom, and for a truly cooperative democratic society. From the special vantage point of their position within the Church, Catholics should be able to teach the world those principles of human life which alone are fit for the New Order of the Incarnation; and, in a particularly clear and certain manner, they should be able to lead men who are still within the secular world, into the way of the practical embodiment of those same principles in new social and economic systems. Catholics ought to be able to hold out something more for men and women of the world to follow than can any secular leaders, whether Socialist or Communist. Because Catholicism points to something not so much opposed to Socialism and Communism, as to something beyond them, that is, to a Divine Commonwealth. By all means let Catholics cooperate with every secular movement which seems to promise something constructive for the liberation of men, here and now; but the world outside still waits their farther leading, mediated from out the forming center of the living New Creation of Our Lord's Kingdom.

Finally, in this preparation of the materials of environmental creation as nourishment for the Incarnate Life, no Catholic will forget the preparation of himself. The quality of each individual is, after all, that individual's own most immediate concern. No man, to be sure, can cut himself off from his environment. Neither can he prepare himself, individually and personally, for Our Incarnate Lord's use unless, at the same time, all human relationships within that environment are also his very vital concern. However, in cooperating with the Divine Husbandman in improving the soil of the world, he must never forget that portions of his own personal, psychological makeup and of his character, are themselves, most probably, still largely enmeshed in the disorders of the soil within which

the Divine Vine seeks to grow. Therefore, these personal elements of relative chaos also require his careful attention. If he examines himself, nearly every individual Catholic will discover in his personality a goodly quantity of the disordered materials of the fallen and unredeemed world. At the same time, he may view himself as wholly fit for a functional place within the Incarnation, only when he shall have achieved that true and final perfection which Our Lord bestows upon His redeemed—His completely re-created—Saints. And since this latter state is one which is achieved by relatively few within this life, every ordinary Catholic will continue to use the grace God gives him, to work at his prayers and at the gradual improvement of his own character. For even though he be in some degree a part of the Vine growing out of this world, the average man on earth unfortunately remains, in respect to many of his qualities, part of the world's chaotic soil as well. Therefore he will not be at pains to work for the improvement of the organizations and systems of the world, much less for the personal reform of other people, apart from his own improvement. He recognizes that all good elements of his own makeup are very much mingled with other elements still contaminated by the disorders of the world. Although he trusts he may be in process of being re-created within the Vine, he ought also to acknowledge that he has as much, if not more, need for redemption than has the rest of fallen creation. He will ask only, so far as he himself is concerned, that Our Lord prepare him, together with the rest of humanity, as a fitting material eventually to be taken wholly into the Substance of the Incarnation; for it is only in so far as he is being personally so prepared that he can hope to enter fully into the perfected Order of Our Lord Himself.

THE WORLD'S RESISTANCE TO THE INCARNATION: PRACTICAL TACTICS

WE SHALL now consider the manner in which a disordered world may be expected to respond to a creative power attempting to restore it to its lost perfection. Everyone who has at some time attempted to do any kind of creative work, especially in the field of the fine arts, knows how intractable and difficult to manage the raw materials of a work of art can sometimes seem to be. Whether these materials be colors or plastics or musical sounds or words, it is often very hard to make arrangements of them so that patterns emerge which give satisfactory and adequate organic expression to those ideas and artistic concepts which it is intended to have them convey. Matter, in the hands of a creative artist, seems sometimes, in its original formlessness and disorder, to offer an actual resistance to the artist's creative attack. It is almost as if matter refused to be forced into a new order, and as if it rebelled against the imposition of a newly patterned perfection. Thus does even material chaos seem to resist the encroachment of order.

And if this be true of the inanimate material world, how much more should we expect to find it so of our disordered human world. Because our world is anything but passively inanimate. As we have already noticed, groups of men always achieve a certain kind of limited or circumscribed order for themselves within a universe which, as a whole, remains disordered. Therefore it will not surprise us to learn, from a Christian historical experience of nearly two thousand years, that by and large, the fallen world tends bitterly to oppose the growth of the Incarnate Life within it. For the restoration of a universal Divine Order necessarily entails the putting of many local orders into new contexts, and the total destroying, or radical re-ordering, of many more. Those who profit by temporary or partial orders, even at the expense of more complete chaos

for others and of an eventual disaster preparing for themselves, often find the loss of the immediate privileges which they have achieved a bitterly disagreeable thing. Such people, blinded by immediate interests, or actually careless of the salvation of the world, tend to regard the Incarnate Process not as a good, but as an intrusive, alien, and even a destructive thing. They tend to think of it as revolutionary, as, indeed, logically it often is, with respect to their own positions. Therefore they oppose it in every possible way.

The methods of the world's opposition to the spread and growth of the Incarnation are both manifold and, often, interesting because of their resourcefulness. The tragedy of it, from a Catholic standpoint, is that, so far as the visible Church has been concerned, they have often achieved a large measure of success. Again and again has the Church allowed herself to be taken in by the world, and chiefly for two reasons. First of all, she has tended to overestimate the willingness of the disordered world to submit to being re-ordered, and she for this reason has allowed herself to be hoodwinked by the world's pretense at cooperation. In other words, the Church has rather naively tended to underestimate both the extent and the painful difficulty of her task. An astute world has often got the better of her, sometimes, it would seem, almost to her own complete paralysis—and this in spite of Our Lord's injunction to His followers to be as "wise as serpents,"¹ and in spite of His further warning that even during His lifetime they were stupidly letting it appear as if "the sons of this world were, for their generation, wiser than the children of light."² As a matter of fact, Our Lord seems almost to hold this kind of stupidity up to contempt; and yet the Church has often failed to profit by His warning.

But the Church has also allowed herself to be conquered by the world for another and a far more disastrous and culpable reason. She has very often shown herself unwilling to suffer the pain and hardship which her creative task involves. She has then argued herself into imagining that, after compromising

¹ Matt. 10:16.

² Luke 16:8.

with the disorder of the world, she could use certain powers and privileges, bestowed upon her in return for such compromises, as tools in the furthering of her Divinely appointed mission. This, as might have been foreseen in almost every instance, has turned out to be a ghastly error. It amounts to nothing less than a giving way to that temptation to which Our Lord Himself refused to yield, when at the beginning of His ministry He went up into an exceeding high mountain, beholding all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and thought, for a moment, of the possibility of using these same kingdoms to accomplish His ends.³ The world bestows, of its own accord, no powers or privileges which can, in turn, at some future time be used against it for its own destruction. Furthermore, Our Lord's own violent destruction which, rather than make this compromise, He Himself finally embraced at the hands of the world, should have abundantly warned the Church that the world might be expected to seek, in every generation, to bring her to an analogous end. The Church has had every reason for knowing that if she ever sought to rationalize herself into a comfortable escape from the suffering inherent in her appointed work, she would by that act be deserting her Divine Head. Yet the Church has elected to do this very thing, not once, but many times. For, whenever and wherever the Church permits herself to cling to either wealth or power, or both—which are dependent upon the preservation of a measure of that environmental disorder which, by her nature, she is pledged first to overthrow, and subsequently to re-create within the Process of the Incarnation—she has made this evil choice. The Church's potential perfection, over against the imperfection of a fallen world, must always be, in a deep sense, revolutionary with regard to that world. Therefore, although the Church must deal continually with that world, nevertheless if she is found cherishing and seeking to preserve intact a portion of that very disorder which she should be attacking, she immediately becomes involved in a profound inconsistency. She will find herself severing with her right hand—her true and loyal hand—that secular support to which, with her left hand—her wayward and rebellious hand

³ Matt. 4:8-9.

—she is attempting to cling. Our Lord's injunction,⁴ not to let the left hand know what the right hand does, was never meant to be interpreted in this disastrous fashion! All too often the Church has shown herself ready to resolve this contradiction by relinquishing the activity of her right hand. Thus, she holds fast to wealth and power even though at the same time she is failing to redeem and perfect them within the Order of the Incarnation. It is thus that she gives in to the world's plans for the preservation of its own relative disorders. Sometimes, which is far worse, the Church can be found trying to preserve and defend the disorders of the world in which she has entrenched herself, disorders which even the world itself is gallantly trying to rectify. Thus is she sometimes—her enemies can even say often—found fighting on the side of much that is hostile to her Incarnate Lord; while the world does actually, if blindly, take the side of the Incarnation. One can scarcely doubt that, in such cases as, for example, the present-day revolutionary economic movements in Russia and in Mexico, the official, hierarchical Church is being punished and purged because she has taken precisely this kind of wrong-headed stand. God ultimately re-creates His world through the Incarnation, but in the meantime He is not Himself bound, even by His chosen means. He will not be mocked when these means deliberately fail His purpose. To any portion of His Church which fails Him, Our Lord still speaks as He spoke to the officials of the Established Jewish Church of His own day: "The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."⁵ Thus, the Holy Spirit, as if in a kind of Divine impatience, rebuking the sins of the Church, can be discerned working in the Church's external environment, often through hosts of men and women who are far from understanding or believing in the Incarnation, or even in the existence of God Himself. Let Catholics, in deep penitence, give thanks that there are now certain visible movements abroad in the world which, in their practical and world-regarding aspects, must be acknowledged as profoundly Chris-

⁴ Matt. 6:3.

⁵ Matt. 21:43.

tian in their immediate aims, even while they are also marred by violence, and while they may actually avow for themselves a non-Christian or an anti-Christian goal.

On the other hand, the world, with its bitterly resisting disorders has not, by any means, always triumphed over the spreading Process of the Incarnation. Neither can that Process, once begun by the creative power of the Divine Logos, fail eventually to conquer the chaos which is now found within His own creation. For this we have the positive assurance of Our Lord who said that, for all the faults and weaknesses which, in her still human membership she has herself yet to overcome, against His Church the gates of hell shall not in the end prevail.⁶

The world's initial opposition to the emergence within it of the Order of the Incarnation, is found clearly written within the Gospel records. The method of this opposition turned out to be relatively crude and exceedingly violent. In the case of Our Lord, when other means of suppressing Him failed, the forces of His immediate worldly environment, organized in limited and localized orders of class privilege in Jerusalem, eventually turned upon Him and crucified Him. The men of Jewish officialdom and of the upper religious castes, the Scribes and Pharisees and members of the High Priestly House, saw clearly enough that the ordered system, such as it was, in which they thrived, would be much endangered if the roots of this Divine Order continued to permeate that soil which was their world. Their particular order, at any rate, could not be appropriated into the Incarnation without at the same time suffering profound dislocation of its own peculiar, organized patterns. In His preaching, Our Lord had often been most emphatic in calling this uncomfortable fact to their attention.⁷

And so they killed Him. But their triumph was short lived. They greatly underestimated the extent to which the Process of the Incarnation had already sent out social roots into the world of that time and place. They greatly underestimated the number and quality of the men and women who had already put themselves at the service of Our Lord, as initial materials

⁶ Matt. 16:18.

⁷ Cf. Matt. 23:13-15, 23-27. Also Luke 11:42-44.

for His re-creating power to work upon. Furthermore, Our Lord Himself, as the very center or kernel of this fresh creative Process, triumphing over physical death, rose from the grave in which the rulers of the Jews had sought to seal His body. Thus did He demonstrate to His first followers His own absolute creative domination over the chaos of that creation which He had now begun to take back into Himself. Chaos, material, spiritual and social, had failed in this first, savage attempt to get the better of His own perfectly integrated Order. Thus He showed to His followers who remained in the world, if they had not clearly understood it before, that they were far from being people left alone, faced by the almost dishearteningly difficult task of following the seemingly superhuman example of a dead Leader who had now gone from them. He showed them, rather, that He still lived in very fact; that He was, as it were, still complete Master of the whole situation; that they were still functional branches of a Vine that was vitally alive; that He was still an active, creative focus into which they could continue to bring themselves, together with all the rest of the world, for their further ordered perfection. He showed them how He was sustaining and continuing the very same Process which He had initiated under the conditions of a temporal human life. He gave them the assurance of His victory, in that He would now continue, as God Incarnate, to clothe Himself anew with flesh in the persons of His followers knit together in His Church, throughout all succeeding human generations.

The opposition of the world continued to be violent. As the new social Organism of the Incarnation spread, it began to clash with established social and religious institutions. That is to say, the Incarnate Order began to menace the established, partially ordered social structures in which the life of the fallen world was expressing itself. It is impossible to doubt that it was this menace to its own social and economic patterns which, in the case of Christianity, chiefly alarmed the ancient world. No one in the Roman Empire, any more than the Jews at Jerusalem who crucified Our Lord, would have objected to some kind of new religious fervor, so long as this might show

itself as something which had only personal, individual, or what we call "purely spiritual" implications. The people of the Roman Empire in the centuries immediately succeeding Our Lord's lifetime were almost as faddist as those of our modern age, running after all kinds of religious ideas, embracing only too readily the latest fashionable cults, lionizing popular religious leaders whether from Africa or from the East. When St. Paul went to Athens, we are told in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, the citizens there were interested in hearing him talk because "all the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing."⁸ The Roman Empire also had an official State Religion, a kind of Established Church; but neither civil nor established religious authorities were seriously disturbed over citizens' private and "spiritual" religious views, no matter how bizarre and exotic these might be. The cult of the Egyptian Isis flourished peacefully in Rome, and mystery religions such as the cult of Mithras from the Persian East were not found dangerous to contemporary established religions and social orders.

However, the Religion of the Incarnation refused to remain a purely "spiritual" and private affair. From the very beginning it threatened those corporate material and economic orders within which men not of that religion wished to continue to live. It turned out to be a radically different "way" of life from anything found around it. For example, when St. Paul was preaching in Ephesus, the rioting mob rose against him, not because of some new idealism which he might have been propounding, but rather because his message threatened the Ephesian silversmiths' business, which was largely that of making small shrines to the goddess Diana; and other Ephesians feared that the Temple of Diana might be ruined as a center of lucrative trade.⁹ Pliny, while governor of Bithynia on the Black Sea, reported to the Emperor Trajan that a "superstitious infection"—meaning Christianity—"was invading not only the towns, but villages and fields, making a desert around the

⁸ Acts 17:21.

⁹ Acts 19:24, 27-28.

temples, and *ruining the trade in sacrificial victims.*"¹⁰ The growing Organism of the Incarnation was already impinging on its environment.

Likewise the martyrs of the early Church, burned, torn by beasts, and crucified by order of Roman authorities, were not tortured and killed simply because of a new idealism and religious fervor in their private lives. They were done to death by the State because they were considered subversive and traitorous. They were thought to be anti-social and hostile to the existing order. They even manifested this hostility symbolically by refusing to burn and offer incense to the Emperor as semi-deified head of the State. The Order of the Incarnation was feared as a perilous underground movement.¹¹ Christians called one another "Brother," a word with as terrifying a sound at that time as "Citizen" was to have to the Bourbons of France in the 18th century, and such as "Comrade" has to certain modern ears.

And so, through the better part of three long centuries, Imperial Rome sought to kill off by violence the Christian Vine growing in her midst, threatening to feed upon the very vitals of the Empire. Happily, the Church can boast that during all this time the New Comradeship of the Incarnation was equal to its mission. With her members suffering and dying bravely, the Church withstood these violent secular assaults. At length, however, this violent tactic was found ineffective by a hostile world. Physical and corporal persecution ceased. In the year A.D. 312 the Emperor Constantine the Great became a nominal Christian.¹² But this peace between the world and the Church was deceptive, because the environment of the world was now really devising a subtler and, sadly enough, a more effective method for combating the encroachments of the Incarnate Life-Process.

The disordered world, having failed in its effort to combat the Process of the Incarnation by direct and violent attack from the outside, now adopted the tactics of a pretended submission.

¹⁰ Duchesne, *The Early History of the Church*, London, 1922. Vol. I, p. 191.

¹¹ The use of the Catacombs for Christian gatherings and worship finally gave this fear a literal foundation.

¹² He was not baptised until he was on his deathbed in the year A.D. 337.

Suddenly the Church found herself basking in the light of official favor. Before the passage of many more years the Empire adopted Christianity as an official religion, and the Church accepted an official and established position in the world. It then ceased to be at all clear that to enter the Order of the Incarnation was actually to set oneself radically and completely over against the disorders of an, as yet, unredeemed world. The Church might now, and did, lay down certain conditions of change within the individual private lives of those who entered her community; but she seemed nevertheless to have come a long way toward making terms with many of the world's own ideas of order outside the Incarnation, dangerously relaxing her criticism of them. At least the Church seemed ready officially to accept, as sufficiently well ordered for her purposes, the secular social and economic arrangements of the time. And so the people of the world began to seek entrance into the Church in large numbers, since this appeared suddenly not to be a strange or anti-social act, but, on the contrary, a highly respectable thing to do.

It is difficult to say which of the two reasons previously discussed, that can cause the Church to give in to the world, was at this point chiefly operative. Both are fairly clearly discernible. For the first, warning voices were not altogether silent. But doubtless the Church as a whole did actually believe that the mass conversions and baptisms which now began, of multitudes of practically pagan, very ill-instructed, and, still less, carefully tested people, were bringing all these people to find a true place within the re-created Order of Christ's Body. In so far as the Church believed this, events showed her to have been deceived. She was succumbing to a careless over-optimism. To advance once more the analogy of a growing material organism, the Church had taken in more disorganized material than she could cope with. She had, so it turned out, foolishly encompassed more of the disordered world than she could, as it were, digest. But, in the second place, it can hardly be doubted that many high authorities of the Church were beguiled by the idea of acquiring and keeping wealth and power on the world's terms, mistakenly imagining that the Church might use these worldly

tools to a Divine end. Such reasoning, as has been said, is always seriously and fundamentally mistaken, provided the world's terms really be accepted.

The Emperor Constantine was himself under no such illusion. He, at least, intended to use the Church for his own ends. The writer of the article on Constantine in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*¹³ goes so far as to say that "his (Constantine's) claim to greatness rests mainly on the fact that he divined the future which lay before Christianity, and determined to enlist it in the service of his empire." It may here be said, in passing, that while Constantine was the first, he was by no means the last great man of the world thus successfully to corrupt the Divine Order of the Incarnation, entrusted, as this always is, dangerously into the hands of men; nor was he the last to beguile its human trustees to use it to the service of the world's disorder itself. To take but one other glaring example, of a much more recent date, the Church permitted herself to be befriended by the Emperor Napoleon on precisely similar terms. If anything, Napoleon was clearer about this than was his Imperial Byzantine predecessor. He wrote: "How can a State be well governed without religion? Society cannot exist save with inequality of fortune and inequality of fortune cannot be supported without religion. When a man dies of hunger by the side of another who is gorged, he cannot accept that disparity without some authority that shall say to him: 'God has decreed it thus; there must be rich and poor in the world; but in the hereafter and for all eternity it will be the other way about.'" "Convinced as I am," he wrote on another occasion, "that it (the Roman Catholic Faith) is the only Faith that can assure real happiness to a well-ordered society and strengthen the foundation of good government, I assure you that I shall endeavour to protect and defend it. My firm intention is that the Christian religion, Catholic and Roman, shall be maintained."¹⁴ That the Order of the Incarnation is here called in not to cure, but to secure, the world's disorder, is shown by Napoleon's naïve admission that his own "good government" and "well-ordered society" both of

¹³ Mr. Henry Stuart Jones, Eleventh Edition of the *Encyclopaedia*.

¹⁴ Quoted by H. M. Johnston, *The Corsican*, New York, 1910, p. 144.

which he wanted to preserve, could of themselves have neither strong foundations nor bring real happiness to men. Thus, they are seen to belong to, and to be a part of, the disorder of the unredeemed world.

The rulers of this world, including both Constantine and Napoleon, have never had entirely their own way with the Church when they have bribed her with security, power and wealth; but they have succeeded to a degree which still shames her, and which puts powerful arguments in the hands of her non-believing enemies, such as, for instance, the Marxian materialists of our own day, who would deny her central Truth.

To return again to what happened in the time of Constantine, many historians of the Church agree in thinking that a progressive loss of her initial high vitality, a lessening in her will to that Divine perfection which is really hers by right, a failure of her primitive vigorous sense of a corporate and thoroughgoing redemptive mission for the world in its entirety, can all be traced back to this fateful moment of the so-called "Conversion of the Roman Empire."¹⁵ The Church began to live at peace with much of the disorder of the world, concentrating on individual and personal problems of interior "spiritual" disorder, rather than on social chaos; making a false separation between individuals and the society in which they of necessity lived in the world; conveniently closing her eyes to certain elements of chaos established in the "order" of her environment, such as, for example, a "man dying of hunger by the side of another who is gorged"; permitting it to be said, as it was later on without contradiction, that "*God has decreed it thus; there must be rich and poor.*" In other words, the Church has, from time to time, practically made bargains with the world to defend the integrity of certain important elements of its disorder. She has done this because these unredeemed elements have to be preserved, since they continue to be the principal sources of that security and wealth which the Church permits the world to pass along to her. Thus has this second worldly tactic of a feigned submission gained much which violent persecution probably

¹⁵ For a compact discussion of this point, cf. Williston Walker's *A History of the Christian Church*, New York, 1934, pp. 111-112.

could never have wrested from the Church. By according her heretofore unheard of privileges, the fallen world of partial chaos, from Constantine's time onward, has been able to gain an entry for its wooden horse of imperfection within the gates of the city of the Perfection of the Son of God.

It would be inexact to assert that the Church can never, under any imaginable circumstances, come to some sort of relatively peaceful working arrangement with her worldly environment. The Church, in her solicitude for the quality of that soil in which she tries to flourish, does not always and of necessity make an immediately radical revolutionary threat to those partial and imperfect orders which the world itself achieves. There is always the possibility of this threat, but the soil of the world is not always so intractable, so unavailable and hostile to the Church's needs, that it must, as it were, be torn apart, plowed and harrowed to its depths, before the organism of the Church can grow within it. Nevertheless, such historical situations do arise. Our own present world situation, for example, may well be of this sort, and it can be convincingly argued that if the Church today were true to her mission, she would nowhere now be engaged in bolstering up or fighting for the world's contemporaneous deficient orders; she would instead be criticizing these radically, to the point of destroying them. At the moment such radical criticism seems a necessary condition for the reconstruction, the re-creation of the world. The Church, for her own further purposes, should be engaged even now in inciting the men and women of the world to a kind of Divine discontent with the conditions of present-day life, discontent with an order which, as has been previously said, exalts, as a condition of its own continuing, man's least admirable motives to a principal importance, and which perverts the higher human qualities from supernatural to demonic ends.

Whatever our personal judgments concerning the present world environment, probably all will agree that the ancient Roman world did seem hopelessly inimical to the growth of the Church, in her perfection. To become a Christian in the ancient world meant logically to renounce practically all the corporate patterns of behavior of that world, and even, as not a few before

long understood, to go apart into a desert place, leaving the world to go its own way to perdition. But such separatist behavior, while it may be advocated for relatively few people who have very special gifts for solitude with God, and for prayer, were it advocated as logical for all Christians would be to renounce the very principles of the Incarnation itself. The Church never teaches this as a normal, universal procedure.

The Incarnate Christ is to be clothed in flesh, in all the substantial activities of the world, re-ordered into His Perfection. While it is true that Our Lord said that neither He nor other men could live by bread *alone*, nevertheless He made it clear that bread was one very important, indeed, an essential element in His life. For example, on one occasion, when a multitude of people who had followed Him were seen to be tired and hungry, He supplied their physical needs by a miracle, while He spoke to them of spiritual things.¹⁶ For this reason, when the world environment of the Church gives such a meagre supply of human relationships which are fit to be brought within the order of the Church, as did the ancient world—or, as we have added for that matter, as does our world today—the Church, for her part, must turn back upon the world to alter it to her own ends, no matter what the cost. She must not go on complacently making preposterously heroic demands of self-immolation or of forced asceticism upon her would-be members, without at least trying, even to the point of secular revolution, to lessen that intolerable strain.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, it would be pleasantly heartening to be able to record that, when conditions were ripe for it, the Roman order was deliberately pulled to pieces by the initiative of the Church, as a preparation for her own new Divine ordering of her environment. This, as far as we can now judge, would have been a fitting preliminary preparation of the soil of the world for the further growth of the Divine Organism of the Incarnation. As we have just seen, the Church of the first three centuries does seem to have made a beginning in the understanding of these stern facts. Also, within two, or at the most, three centuries after its so-called “conversion” to

¹⁶ John 6:5-14.

Christianity, the ancient Empire of Rome did fall to pieces. Unfortunately, the activities of the Church had long since ceased to have overt revolutionary implications for the world. The world had already won at least one round of its battle with the Church, and therefore probably no one now would claim for the Church more than a minor part in the actual disintegration of the Roman system. The Church had already mistakenly made a truce with much ancient disorder, even as that disorder was of itself in process of becoming more complete. The Empire, with all its achievements of culture, its literature, its art, its civil and military administration, its complicated economy, its commerce, its settled life, went to pieces under the impact of forces both external and internal, forces which had had their origin chiefly in the disorder of the world itself, rather than in the determination of the Church to destroy it.

The Church, then, was presented, as one might say, rather contrary to her own plan or expectation, with a great heap of disordered fragments of a former, secular culture. The breakup of the Roman Empire had not been of the Church's contriving, but the pieces seemed, nevertheless, dumped in her lap. And at this point, in spite of her previous compromise with the secular order of the Roman world before it flew into bits, the Church showed that she was still able to bring to bear much of her vigorous creative power. That world which had got the better of her while it retained its own organized integrity, at any rate, lay open to her attack as it disintegrated.

It is interesting to notice in this connection that the Eastern portion of the Empire, with its center at Constantinople, did not disintegrate spontaneously as did the Roman half. And here, the Church showed correspondingly little inclination to arouse herself from bondage and to get on with her re-creative task. In the East, the world environment, preserving its own order, continued for many centuries longer to hold in thrall the Order of the Incarnation. But in the West, the Church, liberated once more, as if by special Providence, from the yoke of the world which she had in the time of Constantine all too readily put on her shoulders, returned to the attack upon her weakened and disintegrated environment. Slowly but surely a new order be-

gan to emerge, an order which seemed to be at least captained by the Church, and which could, therefore, in some sense claim to be all-embracing. This was an order which was brought to its full flower in the thirteenth century, in the Middle Ages, when all the relationships and affairs of men, whether religious, economic, sociological, political, intellectual or aesthetic, were, at any rate, partly informed with an emerging order which was directed toward the achievement of a new creation conformable to the Order of the Incarnation itself.

It would be interesting to pursue this point further, but that would lead to a discussion of the post-Roman history of the Western world, which is not possible here. As they stand, the statements of the foregoing paragraph are open to the criticism of seeming to imply a great over-simplification of a very complex process. The impressively organized Western culture of the high Middle Age was not by any means solely the achievement of the creative Church acting upon her environment. There were secular forces of recovery and reorganization at work which contributed largely to the building up of the medieval feudal system, with its accompanying patterns of politics and economics, and to its culmination in the partially realized goal of the so-called "Holy Roman Empire." But the important fact for us to understand here is that the Church, during all this long historical development of the post-Roman centuries, did actually maintain a sufficient interest in and control over the soil of that world in which she was herself growing, so that the raw materials of which she had need in her own supernatural organism, became, in that period, relatively abundant and, at least, of a usable quality. The Church was tremendously concerned for her environment, and, to a considerable degree was successful in its manipulation.

This is not to say that the medieval world was perfect. It was far from that. In fact, it contained certain appalling evils and disorders to which only the most incorrigibly reactionary romantic could now close his eyes.¹⁷ No Catholic can be aston-

¹⁷ Unfortunately such romantic and escapist critics exist within the Church today. They would present the thirteenth century as a perfect Golden Age to which they would also try to lead us back. A return of the world to thirteenth century conditions as a suggested solution for present-day difficulties, would obvi-

ished at this. The unredeemed worldly environment, no matter how influential for good the Church may be within it, still remains part of the fallen world. Nevertheless, the soil of the medieval world could in some respects be compared to a fertile field, well-composed, well-watered, well-sunned, well-worked. This means that the Church had succeeded in so shaping the practical relationships which life in the world required of ordinary men and women, that many of these could be found worthy to be brought into her own order without radical change. Men were then prevented, by the organization of the world's economy itself, from exploiting their fellowmen in business and trade in ways which are not only taken for granted today, but made absolutely essential for existence in our modern world environment. Relationships between feudal lord and tenants, even down to the lowest serf, between master and servant, between craftsman and apprentice, were made personal, were dignified with truly mutual obligations and interests which are equally absent from the depersonalized relationships of our modern economy. The Church had succeeded in imposing certain definite economic patterns within which were codes, for example, that of the "just price" in buying and selling, and the rules against the taking of interest on moneys loaned. Thus could the men of that time, better than in most historical periods, live and move within the world environment and at the same time, *if they so desired*, find themselves related to their fellowmen in ways which could be brought into the Incarnate Process, as fitting materials for its organic use.

Life under such conditions required, to be sure, a critical, Christian attitude. It required rejections of many evil relationships and modes of action which were quite open to people even in the Middle Ages. But what it probably did not require was either complete withdrawal from worldly relationships on the one hand, or revolution of the world environment on the other, a dilemma which may well be a Catholic's unwelcome portion in our modern age, just as it was in the age of ancient Rome. And so, under these former conditions, the Church, being for

ously be not only impossible, but for those who know the dark side of the medieval picture, utterly undesirable.

a time relatively freed from an anxious preoccupation with the quality of her immediate environment, thinking further, no doubt, that the quality of this environment was in process of progressive improvement, was able to concentrate her attention upon the perfection of her own internal and supernatural life. Thus, at no other period have the central activities of worship, of prayer, of meditation, of religious art and of sacred studies, borne greater fruit than in the thirteenth century. The Church began then to have an all too brief foretaste of what the New Order of the Incarnation might hold in store for man.

But the Church's apparent success of the Middle Ages, while leaving many good fruits behind it,¹⁸ turned out to be little more than a foretaste, a kind of prophetic moment of order in the Church's life, which, as it developed, was found to have neither roots in the world nor vital relationships with Our Lord Himself, sufficient for its continuance and further expansion. It would seem as if the Church's creative powers, as over against the world, were in some sense poisoned by her earlier fourth century compromise with that world, when the first Roman Empire was still strong. From this earlier enervating experience of partial alliance with disorder, the Church certainly emerged with a confused purpose. She had acquired a perverse tendency to suppose that her own Divine Order might be imposed by force. Such a tendency, as we have seen, is in complete contradiction to the proper method of extending the Process of the Incarnation. For the Incarnation must spread by means of converting to itself the voluntary allegiance of its prospective members. Men, however well intentioned, defeat this Divine method whenever they succumb to what is, in effect, a repetition of Our Lord's own temptation to rule by force, a temptation by which He utterly refused to be beguiled.

But although this kind of mistaken, imperial conception of

¹⁸ E.g., the great Gothic cathedrals, today desperately mute monuments to a vital glory long since departed from them; the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas, whose magnificent philosophy is, to the unbeliever, as empty as are the Cathedrals; the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, that unmatched poem which, to Dante's contemporaries, summed up the very essence of Reality itself, but which becomes merely "pure" poetry, completely detached from practical reality, to those who have relinquished the Faith of the Incarnation, which alone gives it all its true content.

her mission could not, as it turned out, be applied by the Church while the worldly Empire was still strong, nevertheless when, by a trick of history, the Church did gain the power to do so, she unfortunately went ahead on this very basis and not by the true method of the Incarnation. She now showed that she lacked both fortitude and patience to work for the re-creation of the world simply by inviting it to enter freely into her own central perfection. She preferred to substitute force for an attempt to show forth a compelling, Divine attraction. In this way the Church came to relinquish her proper efforts to spread her own Divine Order. She turned, instead, to an attempt to impose a kind of pseudo-reflection or replica of this Order upon a still unredeemed, a still fundamentally unre-created world of human affairs. In other words, the Church came to mistake the improvement, the organization and marshalling of her natural environment, for her other and peculiar work of more widely establishing the potential perfection and the still unattained glory of her own supernatural self. It is, probably, this sad confusion which makes the struggle between the temporal and spiritual powers in the Middle Ages, the bitter battles between Popes and Emperors, Lords Spiritual and Lords Temporal, seem not so much like the battles between a resisting, unredeemed world and a Divine Order seeking to emerge within it and thus to reperfect it, as like sordid struggles between two very worldly and deficient orders, murderously contending for exclusive, secular supremacy.

By the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Church was at the peak of her power in the affairs of her secular environment. Within the two following centuries, the exercise of what she claimed as her Divine Authority—we must not confuse this with her supernatural creative power within the Incarnation—grew so closely linked with what was, in fact, merely the administration of her environment, that the order of the world seemed not to be in process of being lifted into the Incarnate Order of Our Ascended Lord, but rather, the latter seemed in process of being pulled down to give sanction to whatever natural human order the Church might impose upon a still fallen and unredeemed world.

As the thirteenth century developed, however, something else very new began happening to the secular world. Men in the natural order began to win a greater knowledge of their own world. Explorers, travellers and adventurers began the process of making the various far areas and countries of the world better known to one another. Trade began greatly to expand. Little by little, the economic activities of great cities, both as trading centers and then, somewhat later, as centers for the production of manufactured goods, began to take precedence over the earlier chief importance of an agricultural economic activity, centered in the great feudal landed estates of the open country. These changes in the economic activities of the world, the "Bourgeois Revolution," as it is called, began to effect, slowly at first and later with torrential speed, profound changes in human relationships. They began to effect radical alterations in the kinds of things men and women did to one another, in the ways they were forced to behave toward one another in the ordinary activities of living and getting their daily bread. And these new activities were not by any means always such that they could be brought into agreement with the codes which the Church had partly succeeded in establishing for her environment. For example, a developing trade, together with town industries, began to require loans of money on capital; and for these loans interest began to be charged.¹⁹ To the Church, this was the forbidden usury; for usury was not defined as demanding an excess of interest, but as asking for any interest whatever. Again, with the passage of time, difficulties began to develop with the exploitation of propertyless laborers in the manufacture of goods for the chief benefit of the employing owners of productive facilities. Here too, a kind of depersonalized relationship began to creep into human life, very different from, let us say, the relationships which had obtained between medieval craftsmen and their apprentices. The earlier Catholic theories concerning a "just price," for goods in a commerce which in the early medieval period was still basically an economy of *exchange of goods*, began to require ever more numer-

¹⁹ Banking operations began in Venice before A.D. 1270. The "Banco di Rialto" was licensed by State law in A.D. 1584.

ous and more vexatiously difficult interpretations, in the economy which was gradually becoming one of the manufacture and sale of *commodities for profit*. At this point it would be impossible to catalogue all the changes of this kind in human affairs which began to take place. But neither is this necessary. The point is that the world, either consciously, or as one might say, subconsciously, began to discover that in the period upon which it was now entering even partly enforced codes of the Church, provided these were based upon a Christian doctrine of human behavior and framed to achieve human relationships which would eventually be fit in quality for incorporation into the Incarnate Order, would be exceedingly hampering to the world's own proposed new system of operation. Again, this is not to imply that the secular world in the earlier Middle Ages had been truly Christian, that is, actually completely ordered according to the Incarnate Perfection. It is to suggest, rather, that the world had then happened to find itself so organized that the codes of the Church did not seem to conflict so very much with what it really wanted to do of its own accord, and in its own order. Now, however, the world environment started to behave in a way which did indeed seriously conflict with the Church's own doctrines of what was consistent with the re-ordering of human life.

The Church, for her part, seemed in some ways once again to do her very best to come to terms with the changing world, in order that things might not be made too inconvenient for incompletely converted men, and that she herself might somehow retain her secular power and control. At first, for example, inalterably opposed to the putting out of money for interest, refusing Absolution in the Confessional to money lenders, the Church, little by little, began to make exceptions according to circumstances until, finally, she accepted commercial banking as a quite proper occupation for her most respectable members. Examples of this kind of thing might also be multiplied; but again, this is unnecessary. But what is of extraordinary interest to notice is that, by the fifteenth century, the secular world, for its own part, had begun to make a discovery which was still hidden from the Church. The world began to realize, even if the

Church at this time did not, that the social Process of the Incarnation was potentially a deadly menace to that kind of new secular order, social and economic, which the world was now grimly setting itself to evolve. Thus the world, at any rate, sensed, although perhaps blindly, that even a complacent and corrupt Church, if she so much as retained in theory the doctrine of her mission as a re-creating corporate force for the clothing of the Son of God with a human social perfection, would be almost certain, at some future time, to place the most disrupting obstacles in the path of the world's new plans, now developing in the course of secular history. Complacency and corruption in the Church could no longer be viewed as sufficient for the world's purposes. The Church's worldly environment determined now, as in the days of the ancient Empire, to rid itself of the Church as a power for intervention in secular affairs.

This time, the attack upon the Incarnation took a different form from that of any which had preceded it. The world now succeeded in cloaking its ultimate objective with so much that was immediately admirable, that to entertain a suspicion of motives which were deeply hostile to the Church's true mission, seems, at first sight, to be perversely paradoxical. In the sixteenth century the world began, not to destroy or to abolish the Church, but avowedly to reform and purify her. It began by seeming to wish only to abolish her abuses and corruptions, and thus not to weaken but to strengthen her; to restore her, since she would not of herself take the initiative, to a lost loyalty to her Lord and to His principles.

The Church by this time had completely laid herself open to this kind of attack. Instead of trying to influence her environment in such a manner that men and women could the better emerge from it into the perfection of the Divine Order, the Church, even as early as the beginning of the fifteenth century, seemed to many good people to be prepared to sell her most precious spiritual possessions in exchange for wealth and power in the unredeemed world. Furthermore, she seemed not only ready to do this, but to imagine also that it was quite possible to measure out spiritual benefits in parcelled rations, as if they were ponderable and measurable things like gold. In fact, if not

in theory, her conception of her corporate social vocation in the Incarnate Process had degenerated into that of a mere hierarchical, power-organization for dominating the world without bothering to redeem it.

On the other hand, the requirements of individual piety and sanctity, always essential and primary elements in any supernatural, corporate social endeavor, were either disregarded or reduced to the mechanical fulfilment of set duties in such a way that the Sacraments and other Rites of the Church were degraded to a level perilously close to that of heathen magic. On her spiritual side the Church had come to look like a sort of great, individual soul-saving factory. She operated like nothing so much as an enormous mechanism which, if the right operations were performed and enough money paid, would snatch souls out of the fallen world, out of Purgatory, and out of the danger of eternal misery in Hell. She then guaranteed to deliver them, polished and shining, ready for Heaven, much as some minting machine might turn out guaranteed, polished and shining coins, quite without regard for the baseness of the metal of which they might be made.

Against this state of affairs the finest spirits and the best minds of the Church herself rebelled, and, as individuals, were ripe for enlistment in a world-wide struggle for the elimination of these abuses. It will scarcely astonish us that a reaction, against a corrupt, corporate expression of Christianity, and against a sad neglect of true individual holiness among the official exponents of the Religion of the Incarnation, led to a renewed emphasis upon personal piety and individual religious experience, as prerequisites for salvation; and further, this reaction led to a profound distrust of any corporate expression of religion which, like the contemporaneous visible Church, could become a prey to such deadly corruptions. Furthermore, it is not permissible to criticize adversely the individual personal motives, not only of thousands, but of millions of splendid men and women who, with the passage of years, showed a high and pure devotion to this cause which, they believed, meant a veritable complete recapturing of a well-nigh lost Christianity. Least of all can we bring anything but sincere homage to the personal courage of

those who, within the struggles of the so-called Protestant Reformation, were willing to suffer and to give their lives for their new faith.

Nevertheless, when all these tributes to the characters of the Protestant Reformers have been paid, and when admission of their personal sincerity has been made, it is impossible not to see, from our present historical vantage point, that with the Protestant Reformation there appeared a completely new definition of the nature of Christianity. Catholics, if they are to make it clear that they believe this new definition to be exceedingly deficient, in fact a veritable abandonment instead of a recapturing of the one central truth which differentiates the religion of the Logos Incarnate from every other religion known to man, should bear their witness with humility and penitence. It was the corruption countenanced by their forbears, as nominal Catholics within the Church, which made the Reformation both possible and, in some sense, inevitable. Nevertheless, nothing is gained by pretending that a reform which emphasized personal religious piety and individual sanctity in private relationship to God, at the expense of what turned out to be a complete *abandonment* of belief in a Divinely given Church—to be thought of, in spite of her corruptions, as potentially possessed of an organic perfection with which the Incarnate Son of God would clothe Himself as with His Body—represents a restoration to Christianity of its pure and distinctive character. That is why we can venture to say that the Protestant Reformation can be interpreted as a process of the world's shaking off all danger of any re-emergence of the social Order of the Incarnation, and doing this, furthermore, while all the time pretending, yes, even sincerely believing, as far as it was conscious of its own motives, that it had no wish but to purify the Church.

Nevertheless, deep down within the subconscious social mind of the secular world there was this other quite different motive. Because, if the Church really had been merely reformed and purified, she would have again risen immediately as a formidable obstacle in the path of the world's developing plans. For these plans were soon to involve social and economic everyday human relationships which would become increasingly competitive,

mutually exploitative, and selfishly individualistic. "Rugged Individualism" was to be, in the not distant future, exalted to the position of a secular virtue; and there soon developed that completely dispersive and atomistic conception of human relationships which is so typical of our present Capitalistic economic system of production. Such a world environment would never for a moment have been countenanced by a Catholic Church which had been both purified and, *at the same time preserved in her organic integrity*. Therefore, under cover of purifying and reforming operations, it was necessary to get rid of her organic integrity. And this was precisely what the Protestant Reformation accomplished for a large section of the Western European world. For those who embraced Protestant Christianity, religion became, logically enough, an exclusively personal and a very private affair. To define religion as "the flight of the alone to the Alone" ²⁰ or, as has been done more recently, as "what a man does with his solitariness," ²¹ makes nonsense to an instructed Catholic. But, on the Protestant view, such definitions are ultimately valid. The individual becomes the only religious unit, and an individual Christian—through Christ, of course—can be self-sufficient when he comes into the presence of his God.

On this new view, any group of people who may have come to believe much the same sort of things theologically, and who have similar tastes in such matters, may now assemble and organize themselves, on the basis of a common confession of faith, or upon an agreed interpretation of the Scriptures. They may do this for mutual edification and inspiration, and so form a "church." However, we find ourselves here with a totally changed conception of a Church. It is now an organization of people which comes into being *as a result* of the coming together of separate, religious individuals who are mutually trying to live lives of common ideals, while gathered about Our Lord as their Teacher and Leader. But, in spite of their assembling together, their relationships with the Leader remain individualistic. In the case of Protestants at the Reformation, the Leader was, to

²⁰ Plotinus.

²¹ A. N. Whitehead.

be sure, still universally thought of as One who was much more than a great Teacher, now long since dead. He was thought of as being risen and very much alive. Nevertheless, the conception of the Church as an external visible expression of the active creative power of the Incarnate Logos, can be seen to have vanished from Protestant Christianity. The Christian religion thus becomes, as far as human living in this world goes, something which strengthens, comforts, directs and inspires individuals that they may lead good and useful lives while still within the world. And as far as survival after death and life in the next world go, the Protestant Christian, again logically, thinking of his relationship with God as a private affair, makes the interest of his religion focus principally upon the salvation of his own soul, as if this were isolated or separable from other living souls. He thinks of getting his soul safely out of this world, and into heaven, through the saving work of Christ which, in turn, is thought of as chiefly directed to this end for every human individual. From this it then follows that religious attention tends more and more to center on the next world rather than on this, since heaven and hell are everlasting and therefore very important, while this world is fleeting and of but passing interest. Neither the pain nor the pleasure of this life here below has any abiding value, and they merit correspondingly slight attention. In this way, the thought of heaven becomes an escape and a release from the obligation of saving and perfecting this world here and now. Why bother about things that are perishing?

And so, logically once more, Protestant theory is in danger of justifying the criticism which Karl Marx, even if with exaggerated and erroneous generalization, made of all religion, labelling it as nothing more than "the sigh of the hard-pressed creature" who in religion is really inventing for himself, and out of his imagination, a "heart for a heartless world, a soul for what are really soulless circumstances." The hope of a perfect heaven paralyzes all constructive effort for the perfection of this earth here and now, and religion, since it tends to keep men quiet when they ought to be definitely rebellious in the midst of miserable conditions, is called "the opium of the people."²² It

²² Marx's words are: "Religion is the sigh of the hard-pressed creature, the

is good to be able to record in passing that Protestants, in action, have often refused to pursue the strict logic of their own theory of religion. It is all the more tragic to be forced to record, as we are being forced, that Catholics, for their part, have so often failed to follow the opposite logic of their own Divine social Vocation, and that they, perhaps even more than Protestants, in practice, have made the Marxian criticism seem valid.

At the time of the Protestant Reformation it was not solely those who left the Catholic Church who seem to have been persuaded to adopt the theory that Christianity was all a matter of individual piety, a method of extrication from the difficulties of this sinful world, the avoidance of everlasting hell and, as a reward for personal goodness joined to faith in Christ, a method of achieving eternal bliss in heaven. Indeed, such a deficient view of Christianity had never been completely absent from the Church herself and, as we have seen, was already rife in the Middle Ages. But the Church was profoundly shocked and alarmed at the Protestant secession and subsequent attack. She was aroused to a searching and a deep self-examination.

There followed many reforms within the Church, through the movement known as the Counter-Reformation, which culminated in the year 1542 in a great Church Council summoned in the City of Trent in Northern Italy. That the Church still retained in fact her organic integrity and her historical continuity is certainly true. She had not lost the *potentiality* of working toward an organic social perfection. That she succeeded, after the Council of Trent, in purging herself of most of her medieval abuses and corruptions, is also a fact. However, the emphasis of her practical teaching remained individualistic. She has not, or at any rate the great majority of Catholics have not, recovered a vision of being the corporate Body of the New Creation of the Incarnation. Catholics, by and large, appear to be infected with the Protestant view that Christianity consists in personal piety directed to individual salvation in the next world. The Church has succeeded in making it appear as if she merely thought of

sentiment (heart) of a heartless world, as it is the soul of soulless circumstances. It is the opium of the people." The passage is from Marx's *On Hegel's Philosophy of Law* (1844). Quoted in *Dialectics* by T. A. Jackson, London, 1936. p. 96.

herself as providing the very best way—indeed the *only* guaranteed way—of doing what Protestantism either must fail to do, or else do in a much less certain and secure fashion. In other words, even the Catholic Church seems principally concerned with religion as an individual matter, with saving single souls, extricating them from their evil environment, and eventually getting them into heaven.

Such being her emphasis, she has lost her interest in the radical improvement of her social environment. She encourages individual charities and palliative measures for relieving suffering in the world; but these things, too, concern only individuals, and carefully refrain from attacking great established social systems, or organized national units as a whole. Indeed, even today, the Catholic Church, whether we consider her Eastern, her Latin or her Anglican branches, still seems concerned to preserve her wealth and privileges in the disordered world, thinking as she has with such unrelieved monotony throughout the centuries, that she will thus be in a better position for saving individual souls. And thus, even down to this very day, have the trustees of the Divine Order of the Incarnation permitted that re-creative power of the Logos, which is committed into their hands, either to be thwarted or turned to limited and deficient ends. Perhaps only now, for the first time in two thousand years of history, are the members of the Church becoming consciously alive to the full nature and awful magnitude of their task. In any event, it is to be hoped that in the future Catholics may understand better those methods, whether of violence or of guile, which the world has, up to now, so successfully used against the spread of the Incarnation.

We may devoutly pray that, by the grace of God, and by the light of this increased understanding, present-day Catholics may avoid, better than those who have preceded them, the traps so skillfully and so enticingly spread abroad for them.

VI

THE WORLD'S RESISTANCE TO THE INCARNATION: INTELLECTUAL TACTICS

PARALLELING this long series of all too successful practical manoeuvrings to combat the encroachments of the Incarnation's creative Process, the world has also pursued lines of theoretical and intellectual attack. To the world it has seemed at least possible that the Church might be persuaded to define the relationship of the Person of the historical Jesus to God, in such a manner as to make belief in the Incarnation disappear at its very source. Failing this, it might nevertheless be possible to advance a view either of the nature of man, or of the world as a whole, such that a belief in the Incarnation and its re-creative action might either be unnecessary, and therefore superfluous, or else incongruous with known facts, and therefore intellectually absurd. Actually all these lines of attack have been tried. To serve its purposes in this regard, the disordered world, in almost all ages, has also been able to penetrate the organism of the Church. It has been able to find men of fine character and great intellectual gifts who were willing to act in its interests. Many a pious and subtle-minded theologian, still at home within the Church, no doubt sincerely believing that he was working only for Christian truth, has occupied himself, in reality, with the development of ideas which, if implemented in action, would logically have served the cause of a secular disorder. His ideas would have removed, at any rate, the menace of the Divine Order. These theologians are the great heresiarchs of the Church.

Because it is so often believed that the cause of heresy is to be identified with the cause of freedom and progress, it will be valuable to notice here that, so far as the Incarnation is concerned, this is not the case. It is the Incarnation which, if rightly understood and then put into action, is revolutionary in the presence of the world. Heresiarchs, as individuals, may often

have been liberal and enlightened thinkers. They may have believed that they were helping to loosen intellectual shackles which bound the Church to the secular *status quo* of their particular times. But it can be demonstrated that it is heresy, rather than orthodoxy, which is in principle reactionary, if by reactionary we mean tending to give aid and comfort to disorders and abuses entrenched in the still unredeemed world.

The fact that theological heresies have not prevailed over the orthodoxy of the Catholic Church, that in the intellectual sphere at least, in her Creeds and in her officially endorsed theology, the Church has always maintained an ascendancy over the world's desires for alterations in her Faith, is cause for rejoicing. To the Faithful it is also a sure confirmation of the covenanted guidance of God's Holy Spirit, preserving the Church from fatal error, as Our Lord promised, guiding her into all truth, even if often contrary to her own human deservings.¹ By the same token, the Church's consistently maintained intellectual orthodoxy is one of the principal reasons for a good hope that, after so much practical failure, Catholics who are found faithful may, perhaps in the not distant future, behold the Incarnation Process spreading once more into the world, to revolutionize and create it anew. At any rate, the true *understanding* of the Incarnation has not been lost. It remains to find men and women who, really believing in its fundamental truth, will, without counting the worldly cost to themselves as individuals, make this truth become visible in action.

The claim that the Church has not fallen into heresy may seem to be denied by her many practical sins and failures which we have been discussing. Her willingness, at the behest of the world, to lay an almost exclusive emphasis on personal religion, individual piety and individual preoccupation with the salvation of single souls, while leaving the evil social and economic arrangements of the world untouched, may seem to be a heresy of the worst kind. However, this failure is not one of positive error, but only of grave deficiency in carrying out the Church's mission. We must call the Church corrupt, complacent, or culpably stupid in urging her members to be "good," according

¹ John 16:13.

to some personal Christian standards which she has laid down, so long as she at the same time accepts as inevitable that these same members of her Body should be forced, by the environment of the world, into what are actually socially sinful patterns of conduct. Nobody could blame the Church more than she deserves for this behavior. But this deficiency is nevertheless not heresy. It is not to deny the corporate principle of the Incarnation, because, within the social process of re-creating the world, private goodness, personal holiness and sanctity are certainly essential, if only partial, elements. Neither is the salvation of individual souls by any means irrelevant. An exclusively individualistic and pietistic emphasis is a mutilated and inadequate one, and the Church has sinned in seeming to consider it sufficient. But she has never affirmed in principle, as has Protestantism, that it is enough. She has, then, in this case, erred through deficiency of practice, not through a deliberate rejection of a part of her Truth. For this reason the Church still retains the power of rousing herself again to a more complete and a more consistent action. She has not sacrificed all potentiality of seizing afresh upon her corporate creative work. If, on the other hand, as we shall presently see, she had fallen into actual heresy, she would almost certainly have relinquished her belief in the Incarnation as a Process of social re-creation. The Catholic Church, we believe, has been providentially preserved from this disaster; and the future, at least, by the grace of God, can still be hers.

The history of the theological controversies within the Church, and between the theologians of the Church and her enemies, may sometimes make dreary reading for a modern enquirer. But although these controversies have often been bitter to the point of violence, and have also often seemed to be concerned with relatively trivial matters, nevertheless they have served to hammer the intellectual expression of the verities of the Catholic Faith into an exact form. Indeed, it is chiefly to serve the purpose of combatting and eliminating theological heresy that the Catholic Creeds have been drawn up. These Creeds, as we have now seen, are symbolic expressions of the Faith, rather than exhaustive definitions or theological treatises concerning the truths for which they stand. The Church in her most vigor-

ous days has usually not thought it necessary to define a point of doctrine until she found that some particular element of her Truth was in danger of being lost or denied. Therefore, if the theological controversies of the Church be regarded in this light, they assume a new interest. They have been the battles in which the Church has safeguarded the true potentialities of the Incarnation against those who sought to circumvent them; for the purpose of heretics is to open the way, not for a temporary victory, but for a complete and final victory over the Incarnation Process on the part of the menacing and intractable chaos of the fallen world. The Creeds which these controversies have given to us are the fully reliable maps by which, if we only will, we may safely chart the true course of a future action, both practical and victorious.

We are not here interested in a detailed history of Catholic Doctrine. We need only to cite a few illustrations for our contention that heresy, and not orthodoxy, is dangerously reactionary; because it is heresy which would destroy a belief in the Incarnation Process. Therefore we need to take note of only a few major and typical heresies, and for our purpose these need to be considered only in brief outline.

One of the earliest heresies to arise to trouble the Catholic Faith was that of Gnosticism.² Strictly speaking, it may be incorrect to term Gnosticism a heresy, because the system of thought called by that name did not originate in a theological attack upon the Christian religion. It was, in fact, already a kind of religion with a history of its own, properly belonging to the group of mystery religions which were fairly numerous in the ancient world. It did, however, possess a philosophy peculiar to itself and a certain well-defined view of God and His creation. Furthermore, many people already holding these views embraced Christianity and, giving to the latter a particular interpretation, became "Christian Gnostics." When this happened, Gnosticism developed a dangerous heresy within the Church, because one of the major tenets of this other religion was the

²From the Greek γνῶσις, "knowledge." The "knowledge" of Gnosticism was not the fruit of observation and reason, or, as we would say, scientific knowledge. Gnostic "knowledge" was a revealed and esoteric religious illumination.

belief that the material world was essentially evil in itself, and therefore irredeemable. So evil, indeed, did matter seem to the Gnostics, that they could not bear to think of the God whom they worshipped as deigning to contaminate Himself with it, even at its first creation. Therefore, the creation of the universe was assigned by them to a lesser deity, a demiurge, a being sufficiently removed from God to secure His remote and untainted purity .

It can easily be seen that under such a view of the world and of God, it would be impossible to bring the two together. Matter, being essentially evil, would not be open to the re-creative attack of One who was, in Gnostic thought, not even permitted to participate directly in the first creation. To Gnostics the Incarnation was impossible. Nevertheless, this difficulty could be resolved by viewing Jesus Christ as God, appearing in this world as a shade or spirit, pretending to be a man but, in reality, not suffering Himself to be polluted by becoming involved in material flesh, or the contingencies of true human life. On this view, the Incarnation would give place to a kind of anthropomorphic theophany. The function of this would be to arouse and inspire men, to lead them out of this world of irredeemable evil into union with God. At this point Gnosticism thought it had a common ground with Christianity. Both were religions of "salvation" or "redemption." However, to Gnosticism redemption necessarily meant extrication from the flesh, while Christian redemption, rightly understood, means union of complete human nature, including ultimately the flesh itself, with God. It is fairly obvious, therefore, that a Gnostic Christianity would lack all of the far-reaching social implications of the Incarnation of Catholicism.

The Catholic doctrine prevailed, and Gnosticism as a sect disappeared. It is worth pointing out that its dualistic philosophy, which considers the material world a hindrance to all approach to God, essentially evil not merely because of its fallen disorder but by its very nature, has remained to plague the Church in succeeding ages. Perhaps its latest manifestation is among those who think of alcohol or playing cards as being evil in an absolute sense, instead of condemning simply the misuse of these things

by human beings. Wherever such ideas show themselves, they are potential enemies of the Incarnation. People who hold such views forget that "the Son of Man is come eating and drinking,"³ that He was no disembodied spirit, but clothed Himself in the matter of this world.

It is also interesting to note that the "born of the Virgin Mary" clause of the Creeds records the early battles of the Church with this kind of heresy. It was necessary to state, as an essential truth, that God, in the Incarnation, really did have a human mother and that Our Lord, behind all appearances, was not in reality merely a disembodied spirit. It can be seen from this that the original chief emphasis of the doctrine of the Virgin Conception of Our Lord was not that of denying that He had a human father. The assertion of the actual parentage of St. Joseph was not a doctrine which troubled the ancient Church. What the Creeds assert is, instead, the other fact, which was denied in certain circles, namely, that He was born as a human infant, His flesh taken from the womb of a mother who, like all the rest of us, was a member of the human race. The Gnostics would have denied this latter fact, and so have made the agelong re-creating work of the Incarnation Process forever inconceivable; for they denied that such a Process had ever been begun.

When the Virgin Conception of Our Lord is rejected by present day heretics, it is rejected for a reason different from that which seemed reasonable to the Gnostics. The latter doubted His humanity, and so denied that He had a human mother. Modern heretics, on the other hand, doubt His true Divinity, and so would add a human father to His parentage. Presently we shall see that both denials, from utterly opposite approaches, have at least one thing in common. They both would, if they could, abolish belief in the Incarnation, and they are, therefore, both equally reactionary. They would leave the fallen world without hope of being brought again into a re-created Divine Order. The disorders of the world, if these denials had ever completely prevailed, would have won their victory. The fallen world could then feel itself safe from any future interference.

Gnosticism had thus denied the Incarnation. It had done this

³ Luke 7:34.

not by asserting that the historical Jesus was not Very God, but rather by asserting that the nature of matter was such that God could not become Incarnate within it. This belief turned God's manifestation of Himself as a Man into a kind of Divine hoax. The semblance of the Incarnation was there, but the reality was absent.

Another one of the most famous attacks upon the Incarnation came from a different direction. This attack originated about the year 318⁴ and began with the teachings of a certain Priest of the City of Alexandria named Arius. It is significant that this man Arius was as well known for his personal piety as for his suave and polished manners. He was of grave demeanor and had the look of an ascetic, which, indeed, no doubt he was. He was the prominent Pastor of the Parish of Baucalis, a suburb of Alexandria⁵ and seems to have been a great favorite with a group of fashionable unmarried ladies⁶ who supported generously his point of view. This whole picture looks astonishingly like that to be found in many a wealthy and respectable suburban parish of the Church of our own day. It is very probable that Arius was, as we would now say, a Priest popular with the upper middle, possibly with the aristocratic, classes. He moved among the kind of people who are notoriously anxious to find a comfortable religious sanction for those habitual social and economic patterns in which they have their own well-being and security. With the temperament typical of many so-called liberals of his class in all ages, he disliked extremes. He sought a compromise amidst the uncomfortable difficulties which the Incarnation presented to him. Arius rejected the idea that a Being who could actually be identified in some sense with the One God, could at the same time clothe Himself with flesh. Thus, he neatly got rid of the Incarnation by holding God the Creator aloof from His fallen creation. He also wished to avoid the embarrassment of asserting that the Man Jesus in *no* way partook of a special Divinity in His own right, different from the

⁴ Duchesne, *The Early History of the Church*, London, 1922. Vol. II, p. 99, note.

⁵ Foakes-Jackson, *History of the Christian Church to A.D. 461*, New York, 1924. p. 298.

⁶ Duchesne, *loc. cit.*

rest of mankind. This assertion, which modern Unitarians with admirable intellectual honesty do not hesitate to make, would no doubt have shocked his contemporaneous, pious followers more than he would have wished. Indeed, it would probably have shocked Arius. He seems, therefore, to have suggested that God the Son, the Logos of St. John's Gospel,⁷ who became Incarnate in the Man Jesus, was Himself a created being, brought into existence by a prior act of that One God who, after that event, was Himself also the Creator of the rest of the universe. Arius contended that God the Son, although prior to the world, was a created, and therefore, lesser deity. It is clear that such a being might reveal God to men and act as the greatest of the Prophets. But the disorder of the world cannot be re-created through the mediation of a being who is himself a part, however exalted, of creation itself. It can be re-created only through the Incarnation of a Person who is one with the Godhead, standing Himself prior to all things, not a creature, but the original Creator of that Order which He must restore, since it is now fallen, by emerging anew within it, in order to take its disarray once more into His own ordered Self.

Contemporary with Arius there were authoritative theologians and leaders in the Church who saw the implications of his teachings. A spirited controversy developed. The Emperor Constantine became alarmed, not so much because he understood the theoretical importance of the issue,⁸ but because he was already looking to the Church organization as a useful, unifying political influence within a disintegrating Empire. He caused a General Council of the Church to be called together at Nicea in the year 325, to decide the matter. This so-called First Oecumenical Council of the Catholic Church decided against the teaching of Arius and, defending itself against the heresy, put into carefully defined philosophical words the hitherto undefined Orthodox Faith of the Church. From this Council comes our Nicene Creed, in which the true principle of the Incarnation is guarded forever by asserting that the Person of

⁷ John 1:1, 14.

⁸ In an early letter to an ecclesiastical adviser, he refers to the whole controversy as "an unprofitable question." Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, 2, 64-72.

God Incarnate is of the "same substance"⁹ with the Father, rather than "of like or similar substance," which would have satisfied Arius.

The Nicene theology uses the Greek word "homoousion" to express the idea of "one substance." The opposing word, "of like substance" can be formed by inserting the letter *iota* in its midst, giving "homoiousion." Hence the historian Gibbon's sarcastic comment that Christendom was once split into warring camps over a single letter. It can perhaps be seen, from the foregoing discussion, that this same little letter might, when the time comes, make all the difference between a potential social revolution and the stubborn maintenance of an unjust *status quo*. For this letter would make all the difference between a religion which would merely extricate men from disorder without changing the world, and one which would perfect the world through the Incarnation and thus also perfect men *together with* it. Thus, even in this early controversy, as so often today, many men popularly considered advanced and liberal thinkers of the time, held ideas which would logically have proved useful to reaction.

Although Constantine himself at first enforced the orthodox decision of the Council which he had sponsored, nevertheless, when he came to a clearer understanding of that decision, he once more sided with the Arians. He persecuted the great Bishop Athanasius, the outstanding champion of the orthodox Nicene Creed, and when the Emperor was baptized just before he died, he called in an Arian Bishop¹⁰ to give him the Sacrament. This behavior on Constantine's part cannot be considered an accident. It was a matter of policy; for the secular power was thus trying to ally itself with a denial of the Incarnation, knowing, as if by instinct, that the latter truth was dangerous to the powers of this disordered world.

The next intellectual attack upon the Incarnation, and the last one in the ancient world which we need here to notice, was initiated by a man of British origin named Pelagius, who settled

⁹ The word "substance" is, of course, taken from technical philosophy and its meaning is very exact.

¹⁰ Eusebius of Nicodemia.

in Rome early in the fifth century. Pelagius, influenced apparently by contemporary Stoic philosophy, laid great emphasis upon individual human freedom. Up to a point this emphasis was correct, but he pushed it to the degree of teaching that every man is capable of leading a perfect life in this world, if he really and honestly wishes to do so. Pelagius was saying in effect that the world is not "fallen" in the Christian sense of that word. Things are really not quite so difficult as they seem. Men are not born as infants into a world of a prior disorder which inevitably makes individualistic human re-achievement of perfect order impossible. If men become imperfect—so Pelagius—they do so only because of individual and personal choice, and, if they are but shown the way, they can reattain perfection by the sole exercise of their rational freedom. Man, on this view, would be a naturally good creature who might make mistakes, instead of being a disordered natural creature in a disordered world, who, by the grace of God, occasionally might achieve a relative goodness.¹¹ Pelagius admitted that men must be *shown* the way back to perfection, and that for this purpose Christ is both their example and their inspiration. On this view, however, Our Lord is not the unique and only way through which men, in organic social unity, can come completely back to God.¹² He becomes, instead, little more than a Guide to self-help.

A theological controversy once more ensued. This time St. Augustine, the African Bishop of Hippo, played a part against Pelagianism analogous to that of St. Athanasius against Arianism. The controversy was conducted in terms of a technical theology. Also, in reaction against the doctrines of Pelagius, St. Augustine seems to us now to have gone to another extreme and to have over-emphasized the hopelessness of our fallen world order, almost to the point of denying to unredeemed men the possibility of any free initiative for improvement whatever. Nevertheless, behind all this discussion concerning grace and freedom, and the part which Our Lord plays in the redemption

¹¹ The present Dean of St. Paul's, in speaking of Pelagius, once remarked to this writer: "His was a very English sort of heresy."

¹² John 14:6.

of man, one fact emerges clearly. Pelagius, in distinction from Arius and the Gnostics, was not necessarily attacking either the fact of the Incarnation or its possibility. He was, instead, denying its necessity and its usefulness. Under cover of theological terms, Pelagius, in his doctrine that natural man already possessed the power to bridge the whole gulf separating him in his disordered world from God in His Perfection, was making the Incarnation logically superfluous. To revert to our former analogy, the environmental soil of the world, of its own initiative according to Pelagius, could, if it so wished, and wished with sufficient determination, form itself into the living Vine.

In this respect, Pelagius in the fifth century anticipates modern materialists; like them, he both overestimates man's natural powers within a fallen world, and underestimates his high supernatural potentialities which are actually such that they can be realized only in the Incarnation. St. Augustine, in conquering this heresy, showed that the Incarnation alone could accomplish the re-creation of the world. He thus saved the Church from another intellectual surrender to chaos, to the reactionary wishes of a world not only complacent, but in this case, arrogant in its own disorder.

Pelagianism lives on and still infects the Church, if by Pelagianism is meant a tendency on the part of men to think too well of themselves and to imagine that ultimately even the worst men do not require the Incarnation, but, being really self-sufficient, have need only of instruction and guidance in order to win perfection.¹³ It appeals to men's vanity and self-esteem. It is the great modern heresy, the heresy of gradualism, of faith in progress and in evolutionary inevitableness. It is the belief that men's affairs are, after all, really not so bad as "extremists" (of the type of St. Augustine) seem to think them, but that they have need only of a slight touching-up here and there. No revolutionary re-ordering such as the Incarnation implies is thought of as necessary. Modern Pelagianism is the heresy of those who lead comfortable lives with few immediate, disturbing tempta-

¹³ A brilliant modern refutation of this over-optimistic notion is given by Professor Reinhold Niebuhr in his *Reflections on the End of an Era*, New York, 1934. Chap. III, *The Wise Men and the Mighty Men*.

tions, and of those who do not come starkly into collision with the appalling realities of the world's deep-seated disorders. It is the heresy of intellectual liberalism, the heresy of the present-day middle class.

In conclusion we may profitably consider one modern heresy. It has already been mentioned¹⁴ that, at the present time, it has again become the fashion in certain quarters to deny the Church's orthodox doctrine of the Virgin Conception of Our Blessed Lord. That such denials should be made by those who also reject the whole theory of the Incarnation is perfectly logical. In them we need look for no hidden significance. When, however, such denials emanate from people who would pretend to remain at least formally within the framework of the Church, they assume an entirely different complexion. It is interesting also to find that, as far as the Church is concerned, these particular heretical questionings usually arise nowadays in the minds of a relatively few, comfortably placed, scholarly Priests and Bishops, nearly all of them in the Anglican Communion,¹⁵ a branch of the Catholic Church notoriously drawn from today's upper and more privileged classes. It is sometimes suggested that such scholars are guilty of a personal dishonesty, since they repeat the Creeds daily while "interpreting" away this particular item of their content. In these cases, an accusation of personal and intended dishonesty is probably extreme. The truth is, these heretics seem to be in partial ignorance of the ancient meaning of the Incarnation, which, in a brief space, we have been trying to make clear. That our material, as well as our spiritual world must be re-created in a radical and therefore revolutionary sense, either they do not grasp, or else they reject. Therefore it is probably not fantastic to interpret their present denials as having an unconscious but, none the less, ulterior motive. They would not elect to break completely with the past, and openly to reject the Catholic Faith; but, as though instinctively, they would like to escape what are for them its worst dangers.

¹⁴ *Supra*, p. 158.

¹⁵ Cf. Bishop Gore's article *The Virgin Birth of Our Lord* in the *New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, London, 1929. Especially, the last paragraph of the article.

It happens that they can do this, at least to the extent of easing their own interior tensions, by making what seems to many modern people, most of whom are unfortunately uninstructed in the Faith, a rather insignificant denial. It may be, so it is argued, that Our Lord was conceived without the intervention of a human father, but why insist on this point which to so many, both within and without the Church, presents so much difficulty? The belief may indeed be permissively retained as a pious opinion, but why insist upon it for all? Nowadays all our ideas about sex relations have changed tremendously. People of old may have thought that the Virgin Conception gave added honor to Our Lord. Today it rather tends to make Him seem odd, and to some, even monstrous. Again, at one time, a belief in the Virgin Conception may have been felt as an argument for His full Divinity. Today, because we are much more conscious than formerly of the workings of God within all natural processes, this argument too loses all its weight. Why could not God Himself come into human life through the appointed channels of His own creation?

The answer to all these arguments may well be an admission that, in their particular universe of discourse, they have a certain validity. However, they by no means weaken the traditional belief, because the Church has never based her own belief in Our Lord's Divinity upon the available evidence for His Virgin Birth.¹⁶ On the contrary, she is ready to believe the excellent, if somewhat brief, historical evidence for it which does exist, precisely because she finds this belief consonant with her own prior belief in His Divinity. Or again, it is improbable that any Catholic ought to venture a flat statement that it would have been impossible for God to have caused the Incarnation of His Son while at the same time giving Him, according to the flesh, two human parents. No one should be rash enough to say what methods are or are not possible to Almighty God.¹⁷ On the other hand, it can be convincingly argued that, for one who

¹⁶ No unbiased critical judgment can, however, dismiss the Birth Narratives of the first two Gospels, as having less authority than accounts of many other facts about Our Lord which are usually accepted without question as historically true.

¹⁷ Gore, *op. cit.*, Sec. VII, p. 319.

believes what we have now learned of the Incarnation, anything other than the Virgin Conception of Our Lord is, humanly speaking, incomprehensible. In any case, such discussions are really beside the present point.

The real point to be made here is that all these arguments for the rejection of the Virgin Birth, if they are raised by those who pretend to remain in the Church, are irrelevant to the actual but carefully concealed difficulty in which the latter find themselves involved. For it is quite safe to say that these usual objections neither contain nor express the true reasons which the people concerned have for raising them. Instead, they are blinds to veil a deeper objection. Once again they cover, as did more ancient heresies, intellectual manoeuverings to get rid of the danger of the Incarnation. For, in this generation, to deny the Virgin Birth is but to make a subtle attempt to pull the New World of the Incarnation Process down into the unredeemed world of a disordered nature. God Incarnate in the flesh is given a human father, and the Process of the Incarnation is completely reversed. The initiative for beginning this Process is taken from God and given back to man. All is made orderly and neat to the human mind, but, be it noted, all within a still unredeemed natural and human "orderliness." There is no disturbing break in our natural human scheme, no cataclysm in the midst of a quiet and supposedly tranquil organic evolution. There is no irruption of the Divine Order into our disordered time and space. God, instead of taking the manhood into Himself through His own Self-initiated act, is, on the contrary, made not so much to become Incarnate, in the Catholic sense of that word, as *entangled* in a disordered humanity. Instead of drawing a fallen and disordered creation back into His own transcendent New Creation, God is made to become enmeshed in the processes of that very creation which it was His prior purpose to redeem. All this, if proved true, would assuredly be to the great and lasting comfort of a world which has no thoroughgoing wish whatever to be drawn painfully out of its present disarray, back into the Order of the Being of God.

Therefore we may well suspect the motives, however unconscious, behind these present denials of the Virgin Birth, because

they are really precisely like those which inform all the other heresies. The denials are made ostensibly on the plea that the doctrine is difficult to some, on the plea that it is not the initial basis for our belief in the Incarnation—an argument which the Church has never herself employed, in any case—on the plea that it is not a necessary, but rather a superfluous item of the Faith, on the plea that it is not congenial to the “modern mind.” It can scarcely be doubted that all these arguments are really coverings for a middle class reactionary aim, seeking, as reaction always does, to cloak itself under an appearance of advanced and even “dangerous” liberalism. Therefore it need not surprise us that certain intellectual religious “liberals” of an older and dying generation, while desiring, because of what is actually their incorrigible and incurable class conservatism, to pretend to hold formally to a traditional orthodoxy, have sought nevertheless to escape the revolutionary implications of that orthodoxy, and have begun protecting themselves by seizing upon the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Our Lord as being “not really important.” By getting rid of the Virgin Birth, one could the more readily get rid also of the Divine Initiative within the spreading New Creation. The denial, when it is unveiled, is simply a fresh attempt to impose the reformist ideology of to-day’s most privileged class upon another system of belief and action, which, if kept in its integrity, is essentially revolutionary with regard to that class. It is an attempt, often locally successful, to appropriate what is under present conditions a revolutionary allegiance, out of its Catholic dogmatic and dynamic context. If this attempt succeeds, the Faith may be emasculated of its dangerously active components, and then poured into the mould of a contemptible sterile system of respectable codes, codes which leave room for an interpretation in action safely compatible with a still unredeemed world. Radical action then gives place to “good intentions.” This “liberal” denial can therefore be interpreted as an attempt to turn the radical religion of the Incarnation into a kind of pleasant honey, to be spread upon the abundant bread and butter of that complacent, that unconverted and as yet unredeemed portion of our traditionally “religious” and pseudo-intellectual society which, in these tragic

days, rejects even a Divine threat to its material security. Thus, these modern heretics still indulge in the luxury of denying a truth which, if admitted in all its practical implications, would shatter, in the world environment, the very foundations of their present comfortable social and economic life.

Before leaving this consideration of the world's resistance to the encroaching advances of the Incarnation Process, we must take up one difficulty which is bound to be present in the thoughts of many who have followed the argument thus far. In these discussions we have been using certain expressions such as: the Incarnation Process; the potentially perfect Order toward which the Divine creative power within the Process works; the Church as its visible organic manifestation in the world. And we have used these expressions, together with certain others, in contexts which, it is hoped, define the meanings they are intended to convey. We have spoken of the visible Church as a social organism which, by Divine endowment, is informed with a principle of life, giving to her a peculiar life-quality in much the same way that a vine is informed with a life principle of a kind which gives to it its "vineness." And we have said that the Church grows in the soil of a disordered world, creating this anew into the Being of the Incarnate Son of God. It is this process of growth which we call the Incarnation Process; and we have said that this may be very inadequately, but nevertheless illuminatingly, compared to that life-process whereby a vine appropriates the disordered materials of its environment into its own organic living structure.

In a series of instructions like the present one, it is always a question whether or not it is better to attempt to define at the outset, briefly and concisely, those unfamiliar expressions to be employed; or whether it is better, since this matter of definition is really the fundamental task of the entire work, to abandon this attempt and to proceed to use words without previous careful explanation, but in such ways that their meaning may gradually become evident. It is chiefly the latter method which we are here adopting. However, as has just been said, before going on to a further detailed consideration of the characteristics of

the life of the visible Church and of those very special means which she has at her disposal for fulfilling her Divine mission, we need to clarify one serious perplexity to which both our foregoing discussion and the analogies which we have used, must almost certainly have given rise.

We have claimed that the visible Church is the Divinely endowed Organ of Our Lord's own re-created and perfect Order, the very extension of His perfected human life. At the same time, in all our preceding observations, and especially those of the last chapter, which concern the practical ways in which the world has sought to resist the encroachments of the New Order, it has been admitted that the visible Church has very often appeared as the loser in the battle. The disorders, or the unredeemed partial orders of the fallen secular environment, have entered the human structure of the Church. Also, many members of the Church, those whom we have a right to think of as responsible trustees of the Incarnation Process, have not only capitulated to the world in practical actions, but they have even served as the world's agents in what are, whatever the personal intentions behind them, no more nor less than intellectual attacks upon Our Lord's re-creative work. Officially, the organized Church has admitted to good standing in her visible Body men and women who seem to have had no genuine intention of putting themselves wholly into Our Lord's re-creating power, or of being utilized as the materials for His New Creation. Instead, many Church members have clung to the disorders of their own lives, managing to utilize the Church as a misleading shield, behind which they might the better conduct their own very worldly and unredeemed affairs. In this way nominal Catholic Churchmen may "take in" members of the secular world, as well as certain of their brethren in the Church, who have been either too ignorant or too little astute, or, sometimes, we must hope, too honest to adopt this kind of pious subterfuge. In the face of this damaging evidence, how can it possibly be maintained that the visible Church, the Catholic Church of actual history, the Church as we see her before our own eyes, is ultimately the Divinely provided organ for the universal re-creation of Our Lord's individual and social perfection?

Furthermore, we have spoken of the Church as being infinitely more than an organized group of men, Divinely led. We have continued to speak of her as, in a literal sense, a living organism informed by the Divine Life. Living organisms, on the other hand, are always readily recognized as organic wholes; they are separated from their environments by clearly discernible boundary surfaces. If we examine a grape-vine growing in the earth, we are never in doubt as to which object is the vine and which the earth. It is not at all difficult to see the dividing surfaces at which either the surrounding air or the environmental soil leave off and the vine begins. On the other hand, if we take the vine as an analogy of the Church, this Vine seems so inextricably confused with the soil that the boundary surfaces sometimes all but disappear. So much unassimilated and unorganized material of the soil seems to be inside the Vine itself, that one begins to be at a loss as to whether or not the Vine is really preserving its own organized integrity. Or, to consider it the other way around, the Vine seems so blurred, and its boundaries so dissolved in the surrounding soil and air, that many men begin to wonder whether, in thinking that they once saw any living organism at all, they were not imaginatively giving substantial form to a mere beautiful idea, and stood beholding a mirage, an illusive shadow which, on closer inspection, now fades away.

This very real and very serious difficulty will be greatly clarified by a more careful consideration of the nature of organized living forms and of their habitual relationships to their disorganized or relatively chaotic environments. We have already noted that every living order is a *maintained* order. This means that a living organism is far from being a mere static arrangement or pattern of material particles as is, for example, an inanimate material order like a picture. It is, instead, an organic whole which creates and defends its own internal, functional integrity in the very teeth of a relatively chaotic environment which continually beats at its doors. It is estimated, for instance, that the material content of a human body is almost completely changed once in every seven years. This means that the body must be continually seizing upon fresh materials found in the chaos which surrounds it, and must persevere in taking these

into its own continuing, ordered, living form. At the same time, the body must be rejecting and eliminating certain other elements of its own content, as these escape from its interior order, and become, in their turn, once more disorganized and chaotic. This maintenance of an active organic structure, in the presence of a relatively hostile environment, is the principal characteristic of the state or process which is denoted by the words "living" and "alive." For example, the body of a warm-blooded animal not only orders oxygen out of the air into the content of its structure, but, at the same time, rejects into the air carbon, no longer serviceable to its structure, in the form of carbon dioxide gas.¹⁸ And if any living body whatever fails to maintain its organic integrity in the presence of its environment, whether this surrounding relative chaos be passive or whether it positively attack, then disease, and perhaps death, the triumph of chaos, result. As it is sometimes said of Indian villages, which have to keep up a long and continuing battle with an encroaching natural environment of growing things, "the jungle then comes in."

If now, with all this in mind, we look more closely at a living body within its environment, it immediately becomes much less simple than we had perhaps supposed, to determine the exact boundary surfaces between the two. If, for example, we look at a man from a distance, it seems a very easy matter to see his body as distinctly and sharply separate from the surrounding air. If, however, we consider his body as a functioning organism which, within its lungs, is continually seizing upon chaotic oxygen gas in the air, and assimilating it into its own maintained order, while at the same time it expels carbon out of this order back into the gaseous environment, the question of boundary surfaces becomes very far from simple. In fact, it is not too much to say that it is quite impossible to point to any sharp boundary frontier, and to say, with anything like perfect accuracy: "Here the organized human body definitely leaves off, and there the unorganized chaotic environment definitely begins." For, as we have said, the chief characteristic of a living body is

¹⁸ The corresponding life-process of green leaved vegetable organisms is exactly the reverse of this.

its *maintained* order; and no maintained order in the physical world ceases abruptly at a sharp boundary surface between organism and environment. On the contrary, it seems to extend outward, from what we think of as the *living* tissues, into the non-living environment; and, by the same token, a certain relative chaos of environment is always penetrating, sometimes deeply, into the living body, before that chaos completely gives place to the overruling order of the body.

It needs only a few examples to illustrate this point. Let us, for instance, consider further the process of human breathing. Oxygen, while out in the air, belongs, we may say without hesitancy, to a man's environment. Oxygen, once found within the oxyhaemoglobin of the blood or incorporated into the chemical compounds composing living tissues, belongs equally clearly to the maintained order of the body. But the mixture of gases within the lungs contains a relative proportion of oxygen and carbon dioxide which is somewhat different from that found in the air outside. And yet this mixture also has a *maintained* composition. The proportional composition of gas mixture in the lungs is kept constant by the process of breathing. Here, if we stop to think of it, we suddenly find ourselves in a shadowy and uncertain region. The gas mixture in the lungs maintained, as it is, by involvement in a living process, at a composition different from that of the atmosphere, is not quite what we customarily call "plain" air. On the other hand, neither are the oxygen and carbon dioxide gases in the lungs yet fixed in the substantial, ordered, material structure of the living body. They are, therefore, not quite what we customarily describe as "alive."

Similar observations may be made about food while it is being digested in the stomach. This food is not exactly "alive," in the sense that it would be if it were completely assimilated. Nevertheless, the composition of its mixed ingredients is being altered into a certain kind of new order which is adapted to a further, complete, functional appropriation. The food in the stomach is not quite flesh and blood. On the other hand, it is not quite outside the sphere of the maintained and controlled order of the body. If it were, it would, as a matter of fact, be

immediately expelled. Therefore, it is clearly no longer a part of the body's entirely unappropriated material environment, as it was, let us say, while it was still unconsumed on a plate. In the cases here cited, the oxygen in the lungs and the food in the stomach are neither quite within the organism, nor quite within the environment. They are *in process* of being appropriated out of the disorder of the environment, into a living order.

And if these observations be true of all self-maintained, material units of order in the midst of their physical environments, how much more applicable are they to that intellectual, emotional and spiritual pattern of living order, which, along with a correlative and mutually interdependent physical unit of order, is continuously maintained by every human being? A pupil, for example, may receive a set of new ideas or concepts from a teacher during a conversation in which novel views and new facts are imparted from one more learned to one less learned. The pupil or learner, considered as an individual unit of rational order, receives these new materials from his external environment, that is, in this case, from his teacher. These new materials are presented in a certain order of their own. The teacher may present them as environmental materials which, with relatively little change, can be appropriated into the ordered intellectual organism of the pupil's own mind. They may be analogous to what we should call very digestible food for a living body. However, the pupil must none the less order these materials into the rational organism of his own individual mind, much as his body has to digest food. This always implies a process of what we have previously called counter-creation on the part of the pupil. But in such a case, who shall say where the boundaries of one individual mind are established? They hardly seem to exist, because the region of interchange, the region through which intellectual materials pass from environment to ordered mind, and from ordered mind to environment, extends as a region of process, under these conditions, from one ordered mind to another.

In this particular case we have been considering the process from the point of view of the pupil, thinking of his mind as a

self-maintaining intellectual organism, and the teacher's mind as part of his environment. But the teacher's mind too is an ordered living whole in its own right. It is not only the pupil who receives new materials into his intellect. Every teacher also receives something new in return during such a process, new forms of thought, perhaps new knowledge from his pupil. In other words, we find ourselves in cases of this kind in the presence of a two-way relationship, and in such a relationship it is utterly impossible to put a sharp dividing frontier between the two living, growing minds in question. Therefore, while the boundary surfaces of a physical organism within its environment are to some extent vague, blurred and difficult to locate, the boundaries between a living intellectual organism and its environment are practically non-existent. Every human mind is, in a certain narrow sense, focussed, or, one might even say, contained, within a particular individual's body. In another sense, however, when we consider it with respect to all its constant interchange within its environment, it "shades off" into wide reaches of influence, it spreads to incalculable distances in social contexts, by means of its relationships with other minds of its environment. And all this extension is somehow maintained or partly, at any rate, controlled by that living order which has its focus in a particular individual mind. In this way, the organisms of some great minds seem to extend their creative ordering powers outward until they inform or, in some sense, keep within their spheres of control, their entire intellectual environments, that is, until, somewhat and to some degree, ultimately they order into their own patterns the minds of all other men.

Thus, every living organism, whether we are thinking of an organized living mind, or an organized living body, or both together as one whole, is separated from its environment not by sharp and closely marked boundary surfaces but, on the contrary, by shadowy layers or regions very difficult to define, and which may be very extensive indeed. Within these regions, that process of interchange between organism and environment which is essential to the maintenance of the integrity of every unit of living order, is continually going on. These regions of

interchange are always somewhat vague and shadowy, and it is often quite impossible to say definitely just where the utter relative chaos of environment does leave off, and the unmistakably living order of the organism begins to have its own complete and easily recognizable identity. Sometimes the organism extends its living control of the environment outward for a considerable distance, as in the case of the air which is maintained within the lungs at a particular composition; or, as in the case of an ordered human mind, when we consider it with respect to its intellectual environment of other minds. Sometimes, on the other hand, the chaos of environment penetrates far into the organism itself, often in ways which occasion disastrous disorders within the latter. As an example of this latter state of affairs, we have mentioned the penetration of pathogenic bacteria into a human body. Here hostile elements of a relatively disordered environment can be found deep within the living organism, having penetrated, unchanged and *unappropriated*, far beneath the region of normal interchange between organism and environment, in such wise as to endanger the continued maintenance of the organism's own integrity.

All these characteristics of organic living processes are discernible in the case of the Church. We have been thinking of the visible Church as a functional part of the living Organism of the Divine Life Incarnate. Our Lord Himself, in His Incarnation, is the central focus of this Life, as He is also the Head of the Church, and the Creative Principle of her own living, ordering activity. In Himself He preserves that re-created Perfection which He has achieved once and for all, utilizing the materials of His individual life, appropriating these harmoniously into His own perfected Being. This is that Perfection which is potentially prepared for every other human being, if he will but permit himself to be made a part of it, allowing himself to be seized upon by the Incarnate Life-Process, while freely relinquishing the disorders inherent in his environmental world, no matter how precious they may, for the moment, appear to him to be. Furthermore, the visible Church, in ways which we shall presently consider, is always kept in unbroken organic union with her Lord. And, by virtue of this union, His

living re-creating power can spread outward through the Church as He appropriates the world into Himself. The Church is the visible instrument, within the world environment, of the Process of the Incarnation.

However, because of these very facts, and not in spite of them, it need not surprise us if the Church shares *a fortiori* all those characteristics of living organisms which we have just been examining. The Church exists upon, and must also bridge, all that region between the central point, at which Our Lord stands in His Perfection, and those reaches of His fallen creation where the disordered world still remains as a completely untouched, chaotic and unredeemed environment. It is through the Church that fallen disorder passes, and, in this passing, is changed into the living Perfection of the Incarnate Order. Therefore, as a normal aspect of the Church's life, we should expect to find certain elements of a newly forming Divine and perfected Order, mingling strangely with what are as yet unchanged elements of a chaotic and actively hostile environment. This will explain the many evidences of true sanctity which sometimes exist within the Church, side by side with utterly inconsistent evil or depravity. It may explain why ignorance and wrong-headedness and neglect of social evils can flourish, sometimes alongside of very real personal religious devotion to Our Lord and alongside of a true, if mistakenly individualistic piety. Such inconsistencies, shocking both intellectually and morally as they often are, are nevertheless disorders which we may really believe are in process of being eliminated. They are, in some sense, the inevitable characteristics of that portion of every organism's living activity in which materials are in a condition of transit, as it were, between the fallen disorder of an environment and the fully achieved organic, living perfection of the organism itself. For it is within the Church that the Incarnate Life-Process is to be found in the act of seizing upon its environment, in the act of ordering this into itself, much as the human body seizes upon its nourishment and begins the process of its organic utilization. It is also within the Church that this same Life-Process acts to eliminate from itself elements of disorder which are found to

be utterly intractable, much as a human body acts to destroy and to eliminate pathogenic bacteria when these manage to penetrate its own interior. In this fact we may find the key to that perplexing appearance which the Church, even at her possible best, presents to an outside observer. She claims to be the Organ of Divine Perfection, and yet she seems to be permeated with unredeemed evil. However, if she is functioning properly, and is true to her Divine mission, disorder is present within her sphere of control not as tolerated or accepted, but only as in process of being ordered and perfected, or, failing this, of being rejected once more into the outside world.

But we have also seen, notwithstanding all these considerations, how tragically often the Church has complacently admitted too much of her disordered environment; and how she has done this without proper attention to its redemption. In this manner, that whole region of her life which she should dominate in her creative work, that region of process which lies between the fallen world and her Lord, appears to have become clogged and inactive. The supply of materials for the use of the Divine Vine itself seems alarmingly endangered. At times like this, God, to whom Our Lord referred as the Husbandman, often intervenes and purges¹⁹ the Church. There can be but little doubt that such intervention is to be discerned in the so-called "persecutions" of the Church recently experienced in Russia, in Mexico and in Spain. For such "persecutions" the more discerning among the Faithful will not mourn, but rather humbly give thanks. The terrible violences which the visible Church now suffers are almost certainly chastening purges rather than persecutions. True persecutions come from a hostile world, as they came to Our Lord Himself, when and because the Church is found being faithful to her mission. These have happened to the Church in the early years of her history, and more recently in certain mission fields of heathen lands. But in areas of the world in which the Church has had her centuries of opportunity and has failed to the point of dereliction;

¹⁹ John 15:2. Gr. καθαίρω. It is matter for sober reflection that the word "purge," so unpleasant to modern conservative ears, was employed in this connection by Our Lord.

when she has culpably permitted herself, as we have abundantly seen, to be duped and cajoled by the world; let her here and now distinguish well between the glory of persecution and a humbling punishment which is both bitter and just. And so let her at this time accept in penitence and tears that purging which, for her correction, God, using even the forces of the outside world as the instruments of His salutary, if painful, action, now visits upon her diseased and torpid self.

PART TWO

THE INCARNATION AND THE SACRAMENTS

VII

THE MASS AND HOLY COMMUNION

THE Sacraments of the Catholic Church are the indispensable means whereby the Incarnation of the Son of God is extended throughout her whole life in a creative organic process. They are the bonds of that functional union between Our Lord and His Church to which we have referred. Therefore they are the channels through which the materials of this fallen world, partly relapsed, as they are, into chaos, move into His central living Order; and, by the same token, they are the irreducibly focal means whereby He appropriates these disordered materials into that New Perfection which He, as re-Creator of the world, has prepared for all men. For these reasons the Church must be recognized as necessarily, because essentially, a Sacramental social body.

However, the Catholic Sacraments, in and of themselves, can do no more than extend a Divine creative activity which was initiated in the lifetime of Our Blessed Lord. In and of themselves they can add nothing new to what He has already accomplished; for, in the sense of having received an established certainty of final success, the re-creation or redemption of the world may properly be said to have been completed within His own individual life. Therefore, before proceeding to a detailed consideration of the Church's Sacraments, it will first be necessary to consider an important aspect, upon which we have so far scarcely touched, of Our Lord's Incarnate Life and of what was therein accomplished.

We have seen how Our Lord, in His accomplishment here on earth, achieved a human perfection. For this we have not only the universal witness of His contemporaries, but the witness of His own claim to such perfection,¹ a claim which not even His enemies so much as ventured to call in question. We have also

¹ John 8:46. "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" The Jews could think of no better reply to this than to call Him mad.

seen that this perfect Manhood, in which He was able to find an adequate medium of Self-revelation to men, was created anew from the same kinds of life-materials which were available to any one of His own contemporaries. These are also the same kinds of materials which are, in like fashion, available to any one of us today. This is what makes His perfection, in one of its aspects, such a source of hope and encouragement for us. It shows us that, so far as the actual materials of human life go, those natural human qualities with which we are endowed by inheritance, those social relationships into which we may enter with other men, such things, which are knit into the substances of our lives, are not essentially evil in themselves but are, instead, evil only because of their disorder and their lack of complete fulfilment. We can therefore glimpse the possibility, in theory at least, of a true perfecting of human life without any supernatural increment of its natural content, simply by taking its elements out of their present disorder into that order which is naturally proper to them, but which they now lack. And this possibility of perfection ceased to be a mere beautiful theory, but became, at any rate for once, an achieved fact in the perfect Manhood of Our Lord.

But, in another aspect, the perfection of Our Lord's human life, far from being a source of encouragement and hope, remains, when it is considered only from a human standpoint, a source of discouragement and despair. We may indeed possess the materials of His perfection, but how can we ourselves achieve it too? What ordinary man or woman is able literally to receive His counsels, in the midst of the actual disorders of practical life as it is now experienced? Who can even aspire to follow the remote and starlike leading of His human accomplishment? Unaided human courage faints before this task. May not a goal known to be inaccessible be a stumbling block rather than an inspiration? Such a pretended goal might even be used as a cloak for low or sinister intentions. In any event, exhortations to seek it seem futile. To honest people it may appear actually better to have no high aim at all, than to aspire to an aim so exalted that even before setting out upon its quest one has the deadening conviction that it cannot be approached.

It is sometimes objected that he who pretends to such a task is running into a future certainty either of unpleasant hypocrisy or of acknowledged defeat. It may be all very interesting for us to know that we have ready to hand, by virtue of being human, the adequate materials of Our Lord's own perfect humanity; but if we are to feel any assurance that the foregoing difficulties are neither final nor insurmountable, we must be assured that Our Lord has really placed the creation of His own perfection within our reach.

Beyond even this assurance, we must understand the manner in which He intends to bestow His perfection upon us. We must understand, as it were, the anatomy of that Process whereby He intends to take the disordered materials of our lives into the perfected Order of His individual Incarnation. How, in other words, has He been able not only to clothe Himself with His individually perfected human nature, but will He also be able to extend that Process which He began as an individual, so that He may further clothe Himself with that human nature which is now the separate and several possession of all other individual men and women, in all other places and in all other times? That is, we must seek to know in what way Our Lord's individual achievement, in perfecting a single human life under the conditions of our disordered world environment, is to be given the potentiality of a universal comprehensiveness. If He teaches us that we are not, as a matter of fact, merely bidden to follow His example, but rather, that we are invited to become organic functional parts of His very Self, we must be shown how a perfected human nature, manifested in a single individual at a particular time and place in history, can be made capable of expansion. We must be shown how His living, growing, individual organism may also have, or acquire, a potentiality for absorbing all the rest of humanity into its own living Order. How can we be invited, in anything more than a figurative sense, or by way of analogy, to become incorporated into His Life and thus be ourselves perfected? What is the secret of this extraordinary organic universality which He seems to claim? How is it possible for Him to command His Church, not merely to obey Him, not merely to preach about Him, not

merely to follow His example and to continue His work in the world, but further, and in a non-figurative sense, command her literally to *be* Him? How shall He extend, not His influence only, but His perfected, living Self, throughout all human generations and to the uttermost parts of the earth?

In other words, there is a genuine difficulty which arises when we think of Our Lord's perfected individual humanity only, and try to see in this alone a seed which has the potentiality of growing into that Vine which will eventually take its entire disordered environment into itself. For it would seem that no individual human perfection, no matter how wide and varied might be its content, even the perfection of Our Lord's humanity, can of itself be regarded as an adequate and sufficient nucleus for a future, living, universal, all-inclusive Order of a socially redeemed and re-created humanity. Any merely human perfection, attainable under the conditions of life in this fallen world environment, must necessarily be described as, in some sense, a limited perfection. Of Our Lord Himself it can be accurately said that He achieved a true human perfection. Nevertheless, in His human life He was an individual, and therefore not "perfect" in the sense of being immediately universal or of comprising in Himself all humanity at once. In other words, His humanity was finite. How then was He, even potentially, universal? If the Incarnation means, as we have said, the outward spread of a re-created organic social order from this one Man as its vital center, how shall such a Process be implemented? If all other men and women are henceforth to be perfected, individually and socially, by becoming incorporated into His Perfection, in what sense or in what manner can they be incorporated into a single human being? How can they be absorbed into the life-process of a single Man who, great as He was, nevertheless was but an individual, a member of the Jewish nation, a carpenter by trade, One who lived for a relatively brief life span of thirty-three years, having His home in the small provincial town of Nazareth of Galilee, two thousand years ago?

In addition to this limitation, inherent in human individuality, there is another limiting aspect of Our Lord's human

perfection which needs to be noticed. The central and all-important reality of His perfection consists in that perfection of living *order* which He achieved in His human nature. This was an integrated order of all the elements, physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, which went to make up the complete Man. However, as we have now repeated many times, the elements which gave *content* to this order, in distinction from the order itself considered as a system of perfectly integrated living relationships, were drawn from His world environment. In other words, although they were brought into a perfected organic harmony, completely controlled by His own sovereign creative will, completely corresponding to the Divine will for Himself, they had nevertheless in themselves a previous history from which, so long as they remained within His humanity—even His *perfected* humanity—they could not be completely liberated.

We are here encountering once more the root of the difficulty which confronts us when we try to think of perfecting any human being or, for that matter, any human social order, within a still imperfect and disordered world environment. When we call Our Lord, as a human being, "perfect," we are by that very act making a distinction between the human materials with which He chose to work, and the living *order* which He achieved in using them. We are making a distinction between the elements which entered into His human personality, and the ordered pattern within which Our Lord employed them as its substantial content. We are distinguishing between the perfected system of relationships evident in His humanity, and the quality of the *relata*, the "things related," which, considered alone and by themselves, may be very far from perfect.

This kind of distinction may be clarified, by way of analogy, if we analyze the ordered form of some musical composition such as, for example, a symphonic work for a large orchestra. From practically all such compositions, especially from those written in the so-called modern manner, it would be possible to separate individual passages, sometimes of considerable length, which, when taken out of their contexts, would sound anything but harmonious and beautiful. They might, in fact, give an

effect of extreme cacophony. In other words, such passages, apart from the order of the whole, might be judged actually *disordered*, musically chaotic, and therefore, within their peculiar universe of discourse, evil. Nevertheless, when they are incorporated organically into the order of the entire symphonic work, they are capable of entering into an integrated series of relationships which themselves turn out to be perfected and good. It seems, therefore, that passages of disordered dissonance, in an absolute sense bad in themselves, can be utilized as *relata* within a larger order of musical relationships which emerges, as a whole, not as something bad and disordered, but, on the contrary, as an ordered music, perfect, beautiful and good.

The materials of Our Lord's humanity were chosen out of a world of disorder, and many of them, therefore, like the dissonant passages of music in our analogy, remained, in a sense, imperfect. Nevertheless, the order of His humanity, like the order of the symphony as a whole, can none the less properly be described as perfect. However, this kind of perfection cannot be described as an *absolute* perfection. It is achieved by the re-ordering of materials which themselves persist as imperfect because they remain, in some sense, related to, and therefore contingent upon, their sources in the disorder of the environment. Thus, it is a *contingent* perfection. And such contingency presents a deficiency from which even Our Lord's perfected humanity, so long as we think of it solely upon its natural, created, human level, was not by any means free.

We must consider this latter point more in detail. To begin with, as the Divine Logos became Incarnate, entering this disordered world of time and space, He took the initial materials for His human nature from a human mother. He took a material body from a previously existing human body. He drew, also from His mother, all that supply of material and psychological potentialities for future development as a human being which He chose to receive in common with all other men. Thus, at the very outset of His human life, His initial materials for that life had their roots within the history of a still disordered world. These materials had, to be sure, never lost their

potentiality of being ordered into a perfected human being. They cannot, however, be described as absolutely perfect in themselves, or absolutely good, because it is impossible to eliminate from their content that disordered history, within a fallen creation, from which they emerge.

As Our Lord grew, the human relationships which He established, the ideas and natural knowledge which He received, the very food which entered into the composition of His body, had also to be appropriated into His perfect manhood from an environment which remained disordered. His food came to Him from an economic system honeycombed with injustices, and based upon the institution of chattel slavery. His social relationships with family, friends and others, while perfected into His own order in what we might describe as His end of those relationships, were, none the less, relationships established with people who, for their part, were still enmeshed within the disorder of the world.² In this respect, Our Lord's perfected humanity—since He was, no more than any other man, an isolated, still less, an insulated individual—"shades off" in its social setting into the disorder of the world.³

When we analyze His intellectual knowledge, we find that all the elements in the perfected order of His mind were taken directly from the environment of His day; and, certain items of His human knowledge are now known to be, when judged by

² This kind of contingency in Our Lord's perfection causes discomfort to certain pious minds. Christian thinkers, with an all too human craving for the Absolute here-and-now, have sometimes tried to get around this difficulty. For example, the modern Roman Catholic Dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lord's Mother, states that, by a miraculous intervention of God, Our Lady was herself freed from the taint of Original Sin (that is, from the historic burden of the world's disorder) at the moment of her own conception. From the present point of view, this seems to be an attempt to perfect in an absolute sense the initial human materials of Our Lord's life, by extricating them miraculously from their disordered historical contexts. We shall see presently that this miracle seems unnecessary. Our Lord was quite prepared to use imperfect materials to give content to His perfected human order. Furthermore, the Dogma does not touch the materials of Our Lord's subsequent environment, of which He began to make use immediately upon His birth into the world. It does not detach these other materials from *their* disorder, either in His day or within their own history. Thus, the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception seems, in any case, to accomplish only half the purpose for which it appears designed.

³ He numbered, among His immediate friends, a man sufficiently disordered in his own life to betray Him to a death on a Cross.

later standards, not only incomplete and therefore imperfect, but actually false.⁴

Finally, in this connection, we must notice that the order of His human perfection included, within its content, experiences of sorrow, disappointment and fear,⁵ of disillusionment,⁶ of black despair,⁷ and ultimately, of physical torture,⁸ and of a death of His human body on a Cross.⁹ Obviously none of these elements of tragic natural experience, which are discernible within the sum total of Our Lord's earthly life and which, one by one, were cumulatively taken by Him into the perfected organism of His humanity, can be said to be intrinsically good in themselves, or good in any absolute sense whatever. On the contrary, if considered in connection with the perfect will of God the Father, and with God's original intention for His unfallen creation as a whole, they would have to be labelled as desperately disordered and therefore evil. However, they are not only appropriate, but also necessary, building blocks of a true order of new relationships within the humanity of Our Lord; because out of these, within a fallen world, He creates a pattern of human nature which, *under the circumstances*, corresponds perfectly to the will of God for Him. It is in this that His human perfection consists. It is an ordered whole, which conforms perfectly to God's will, given that Our Lord's task is that of forming a perfect human order in the midst of a persistently disordered world.

It need hardly be said that within a perfectly ordered creation, within an unfallen world, a life containing elements of human ignorance and failure, tragedy, betrayal and death, would have to be viewed as a pattern of grotesque *disorder*. However, once disorder has come into creation, then no newly perfected human order whose content has to be taken from that

⁴ For example, He makes the point of an argument with the Scribes depend upon the ascription of Psalm 110 to David as its author. This is now known to be a wrong ascription, although it was that accepted by all learned men of His time.

⁵ *E.g.*, The Agony in Gethsemane, Mark 14:32-41.

⁶ *E.g.*, Realization of His rejection by the Jews.

⁷ *E.g.*, The Dereliction on the Cross, Mark 15:44.

⁸ *E.g.*, The Crown of Thorns and the Scourging by the Roman soldiery.

⁹ Mark 15:37.

creation, can escape the inclusion of these or similar elements. They become the *relata* of the very perfection of its ordered relationships. And this must be true of every emerging re-created natural perfection so long as the relative chaos of the rest of fallen creation shall itself endure around that perfection. This is the kind of contingent perfection which we see in the humanity of Our Lord. It is contingent because, being itself perfected in the midst of a still persisting chaos, it had to utilize, in establishing the new relationships of its re-created harmony, elements of content which were, from an absolute point of view, persistingly chaotic. It is this *tragic* human perfection which the Divine Logos was willing to take upon Himself, that He might initiate the re-creation of His fallen world.

Thus, Our Lord's human perfection, when viewed alone as an achievement in the history of the world, remains an individual perfection. Also, it is clearly contingent, and not absolute. It remains the perfection of the Man Jesus. It therefore remains a perfection not of the absolute Being of God, but rather, a created one of perfect correspondence to the will of God for a unit of human nature developing under the conditions of a disordered created world. Our Lord's human perfection has as yet neither an absolute nor a universal order. It is, instead, that peculiar, contingent order which is the only perfection obtainable within a chaotic human environment. Therefore He is properly described as Perfect Man, but "inferior to the Father, as touching His Manhood";¹⁰ and He could say of Himself in this connection, "My Father is greater than I."¹¹

To sum up, then, the perfection of Our Lord's human accomplishment resides in the perfection of the ordered structure of His human life as a whole. Human nature is here fully actualized in an individual person, namely, the Man Jesus. This Individual presents to us a created whole which, for the first time since the fall of our world, perfectly fulfils the will of God for human nature. Our Lord demonstrates for us what man really is. Nevertheless, this perfection of *order* is achieved through the creative organic union of *materials* or *elements*

¹⁰ Athanasian Creed.

¹¹ John 14:28.

which, in and of themselves, still remain in some sense imperfect, since they are received from the still persisting disorder of Our Lord's environmental world. His perfection is analogous to that of the ordered system of musical relationships in the symphonic composition of our previous analogy. Many of the actual elements which form the *relata* of the perfected system of relationships of His humanity, correspond, in some sense, to the dissonant passages of that same composition, retaining certain discords and imperfections which derive from their sources in our everyday, unredeemed world.

It follows that Our Lord's human perfection, so long as it is viewed simply and solely upon the level of natural life, suffers from the following limitations or deficiencies. First, it is individual, and not yet potentially universal. This means that it cannot, on its human level, incorporate into itself the re-created achievements of the lives of human individuals other than itself; whereas, the re-creation of the world in the Incarnation requires a Center of Perfection into which all men may enter, receiving their own single perfections by being incorporated or engrafted into a Universal Order. Second, it is contingent, and not absolute. This means that it contains elements of suffering, despair, discouragement and human ignorance; whereas, the redemption of humanity ultimately requires an absolute perfection, not of order only, but of content also, in which these tragic elements shall no longer persist at all. And thirdly, it is mortal. This means that it is rounded out in a torturing and ignominious death; whereas, the final redemption of the world demands that death itself shall be done away in the absolute perfection of a triumphant, deathless and eternal consummation.

Now it is precisely these three requirements for an ultimate, absolute redemption of the world which the Divine Logos, and He alone, could fulfil. He alone could solve the problem, which is utterly beyond any merely human attack, of making His individually perfect Manhood potentially universal; of carrying its necessarily contingent elements into an Absolute Perfection; and of rescuing all perfected order, re-achieved within our world, from that death which awaits even perfection so

long as the latter is allowed to remain upon the level of natural creation.

On the natural level of His creation, as we have just seen, Our Lord limited His creative work to the reperfecting of a natural man, the Man Jesus. Here, in this individual, He achieved a completely, although a contingently, perfect manhood, within whose functional pattern no slightest trace of disorder found a place. At this point we must both indicate and avoid another error which is sometimes held concerning His human perfection. Not only was the latter free from all disorder on the level of nature, but it was in no way whatever "super-perfect." Although, as will presently be emphasized, He was Perfect God, as well as Perfect Man, He refrained completely from adding to His actual humanity any supernatural elements or materials which might conceivably have made His human task somewhat easier for Him. For supernatural elements are as inadmissible in an order proper to a perfect *humanity*, as are elements of natural disorder and sin. In Our Lord's case, supernatural additions to His humanity would have rendered the result achieved by Him, not perfectly human, but superhuman, which is really to say inhuman, and, therefore, utterly inaccessible to us.

As an illustration of what is meant by the foregoing analysis we may point out that even the immediate nearness to God which was His as a human being, His complete and sustained union with His Father, by virtue of which His creative will accomplished the perfection of His humanity, was the product of a perfect faith perfectly exercised in prayer, in action and in communion with God at every moment of His life. For we may not suppose that Our Lord, as a human being, was endowed with Divine intellectual certainties about His task and about His future, which were different in *quality* from certainties which we too, by the grace of God, may ourselves possess, at least conceivably, through faith. His sorrows, His agonies and His death were not alleviated or lightened by some Divine and superhumanly seer-like insight into the realities behind them, that rendered them easier to bear. Our Lord, like other human beings, walked in this life by faith, not by supernatural sight;

although it is necessary to add that, in His case, perfect faith must, in a sense, have coincided with sight, and such a faith must have brought even a greater certitude than any superhuman knowledge based upon some special and privileged revelation could ever have brought. Therefore, that triumphant personal confidence which Our Lord achieved, so strong that He was confident even in His death He was perfecting creation and conquering what seemed to other human eyes the final triumph of chaos and disorder, was born of a certitude based not on superhuman knowledge, but on faith, unwavering even in the midst of a bottomless human anguish. It is, of course, this very faith which is the crown and climax of His perfect Manhood.

On the other hand, without in any way permitting ourselves to think of Our Lord's true humanity as in some sense superhuman, we have also to bear in mind that in Him it is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Eternal Logos, who takes the initiative in that redeeming and re-creating Process which has its beginning in His human life. Our Lord is not only Perfect Man. He is also Perfect God. We must guard ourselves against thinking of God as present in Him as a kind of supernatural, off-stage Assistant—a kind of *Deus ex Machina*, supernaturally intervening in Our Lord's human experience to help Him over the most difficult obstacles arising during the course of the creation of His perfect Manhood. But nevertheless, perfectly united in the single Person of Jesus, there are, as it is traditionally put, two Natures, a human nature and a Divine. Thus, God is present in His Person, not as a supernatural help to His humanity, but rather as always receiving Our Lord's perfectly realized humanity into His Divine Being. And Our Lord ordered the materials of human life into a perfect human organism within the world, such that it could be thus received by God. The ordered perfection of Our Lord's human nature was such that this could be taken "further on," conveyed as it were, into the Order of the Divine Nature too. This means that everything which He, out of His world of time and space, out of fleeting history and out of disordered and finite human contexts, re-created into what was necessarily, as we have now seen, the individual, the contingent and the mortal perfection

of the order of His human nature, was, at the same time, taken beyond the Man Jesus, conveyed beyond time and space, beyond contingency, beyond mortality and finiteness, to the level of the Absolute, the Universal, the Timeless and the Eternal, into His Divine Nature, into the Being of God Himself.

This means further that in one sense, just so far as we confine ourselves to thinking of Our Lord's individual human nature, it is correct to say that He lived and taught and entered into relationships with other men, and finally suffered and died upon a Cross, two thousand years ago in Palestine. These are all facts of a history long since past. In this sense Our Lord's life and work are "finished," completed. They recede behind us into the ever-deepening mists of ancient time. But in another sense, since in Him the Divine Nature was united with His human nature, nothing that He ever said or did can be thought of as "finished" or as receding in time. Every element of His perfectly actualized human nature was, at the instant of its creative appropriation within this world, received by Him into His Divine Nature. Therefore, His historical accomplishment evermore resides not only in time but in Eternity, not only in space but in Spacelessness, not only in the finite and circumscribed life of the Man Jesus of Nazareth, but also in the Infinite and Universal Heart of God.

This Process, that of the taking of the contingent, finite and mortal perfection of re-created manhood into the uncreated Absolute, the Infinite, the Eternal Perfection of God, is usually called the Process of the Atonement. It is the crowning Action of the Incarnation, for the initiation of which it required a perfectly ordered human being, re-created out of our disorder, yet still in the midst of that disorder, "in the world and yet, not of it." It was this Our Lord supplied.

The amazing and unique thing which Our Lord accomplished, in His human nature, was to prepare a perfected human individual taken out of a disordered creation, of a quality so actualized according to the full potentialities of man that it was capable of being then conveyed further, out of all contingency, into Absolute Perfection. His was a humanity which, alone and uniquely among men, achieved that complete perfection which

is conformable to God's will for a human being maturing within a disordered creation. Thus did Our Lord prepare a unit of finite order fit for presentation to God, adequate to be taken into that Perfection which resides beyond creation in the Being of the Creator Himself.

In Our Lord's Person, then, time is taken into Eternity. Human perfection which, at its highest within the disordered world, is still perishable, is taken into the Imperishable. Contingent human values are taken into Absolute Divine Values. That which is limited in scope is made potentially universal. That which is finite is taken into Infinity. And so we discover that that which was sorrow and agony in the organism of Our Lord's contingent human perfection as it grew within a disordered environment, is received into an eternal joy and gladness. That which was human defeat becomes absolute and therefore universal triumph. The very material content of His body, taken into His human organism from the physical world, is ordered from its contingent natural perfection into the supernatural¹² Order of His Risen Body, beyond the limitations of our time and space. His death upon the Cross, a culminating element of experience appropriate to, and harmonious within, the perfected ordered structure of His human nature, under the circumstances of His human life, is taken into the Order of the Divine Life. As St. Paul has it,¹³ that which is mortal thus puts on immortality, and that which is corruptible puts on incorruption. Humanity's true potentialities, not only within this world, but beyond and above it, are revealed. And Our Lord Himself begins anew for us the Process of their attainment, as the perfectly ordered natural substance of a manhood recreated by Him out of the materials of our world, is taken by the Divine Son into the Absolute Order of the Substance of God's Being. All this, in the language of Catholic theology, availing itself of the clarity and precision of a terminology borrowed from Greek philosophy, may be called the *Transubstantiation* of Our Lord's perfected humanity, body, soul and spirit,

¹² The word "supernatural" as we here use it, means only that which is above and beyond nature. It has no reference to the strange or the prodigious.

¹³ I Cor. 15:53.

in such wise that it now assumes that Absolute Perfection which is the attribute of God alone.¹⁴

It should now be clear that the re-creation of our disordered world, as revealed in the accomplishment of Our Blessed Lord, is a process which, at any rate in thought, can be analyzed into two parts. Both of these parts are indispensable to the complete redemption of fallen humanity. First, a newly created order, upon the level of our nature, must be brought again out of our present disorder. This is an order conforming to God's will for natural man, and it is one which is possible of achievement within a world environment in which a disorder, external to that newly forming center of order, still persists. In other words, a center of order, an individual unit of order, must be achieved within the level of our fallen creation. Such is the perfection of Our Lord's humanity, with all that this implies both in the perfection of one individual human character and in the perfection of those social relationships in the midst of which His humanity was set within its contemporary world environment. But we have also seen that Our Lord's humanity, while perfected in Himself as an individual, remains none the less contingent, finite and mortal. It is not yet absolute, potentially universal, nor immortal. It is instead an order which is perfect *under the circumstances* of a still persisting environmental disorder which He, in His allotted lifetime, could by no means directly touch in its entirety. Nevertheless, because He was both man and God, Our Lord, doing what would be forever impossible to any merely human being—even to a perfect one—carries His perfect achievement out of its created environment of disorder into the Absolute Perfection of the Divine Being. This is the second part of Our Lord's redeeming accomplishment, and it is thus that the process of the salvation of His humanity is completed. It is thus that His own individual achievement not only becomes eternalized and made absolute, but, becoming also opened to a universal compass, is rendered potentially accessible to all human beings in every other time and place.

¹⁴ St. Paul's phrase "puts on" would seem to be equivalent to "is transubstantiated into."

Neither one of these two parts of the entire process of re-creation and redemption is prior to the other in time. God Himself is, of course, absolutely prior to creation in the beginning of time; and His initiative in the process of *re*-creation, as the Logos Incarnate emerges within our disordered world, is, by the same token, fundamentally prior to the achievement of Our Lord's human perfection. However, the making absolute of Our Lord's human perfection waited equally upon His truly human achievement. It was necessary to perfect an organically ordered unit, actualizing humanity's highest potentialities *within* creation, before this achievement could be received above and beyond creation, into the Divine Life. The final end of man, in God's intention for him, is that not only shall he be perfected in his humanity, but glorified beyond the level of natural creation, in a true sense made a partaker of the Divine Life. But the necessary preliminary of this ultimate salvation, from the point of view of human beings still on the level of natural creation, is the perfection of humanity within the world. And Our Lord's Incarnate Life both reveals this two-fold character of our redemption, and initiates its accomplishment.

When we consider Our Lord's own Life as a two-fold process, it is, of course, impossible to make any sharp separation between His humanity and His Divinity. It is impossible to say at any given point: "In this, or so-and-so, He was perfecting His humanity, adding something to His ordered self which can be seen to be entirely within the level of our creation." It is equally impossible to say at some other point: "In this, or so-and-so, He was acting to convey His human achievement out of the level of our nature into His Divine Nature; taking this particular moment out of time into His Eternity; taking this particular human value out of contingency into the Absolute." We must think of both of these processes as coincidental at every instant. Thus, we think of His entire human life as a continually perfected offering or gift to God, an offering fit to be taken into the Substance of Absolute Perfection; and we think of God, in Him, as at every moment accepting this gift out of creation into His transcendent Life.

However, the consummation of this offering, the event in

which the entire accomplishment was summed up and the sacrifice of Our Lord's perfect human life was completed,¹⁵ is seen in the utter and final spending of that life upon the Cross. The Cross not only caps and sums up His whole accomplishment of a re-created human perfection within our world, but it also conveys this, with finality and as a whole, into the hands of God. And after this, the Resurrection from the grave is the final demonstration to us of God's acceptance of His perfected humanity into Himself. It is the conclusive witness to the fact of its reception, out of all the contingency, finiteness and mortality of creation, into the transcendent level of Absolute Perfection, Universality and Eternity. For on the Cross there died a human being who summed up within Himself a perfected human life, salvaged, wrenched, as it were, with all its content—material, intellectual, social, spiritual—from a far from perfect and a murderously resisting environment. At the same time the Divine Logos, the Son of God, continuing beyond the Cross, thus conveyed all the perfected content of His Incarnation into the very Godhead, through the Resurrection, and, finally, by His Ascension and withdrawal from time and space. It is this final act of the carrying of His perfect Manhood into God, sealed in the Resurrection and consummated in the Ascension, that constitutes, in its completeness, what is called the Sacrifice of the Cross.

From these preliminary considerations we may now return to an examination of the Sacraments of the Church, because it is by means of these that the twofold process of re-creation, which we have just been discussing, is extended to us who still remain in a succeeding history. The Catholic Sacramental System has its roots, by Our Lord's own provision, in His Incarnate Life. It is, therefore, through the Sacraments that He has opened the way into that Life for us, both to follow the leading of His human accomplishment and also to become, as we have said, functional parts of His own Being, to enter thus not only into the

¹⁵ John 19:31. According to St. John's Gospel, Our Lord's last words were: "It is finished!" Surely the most dramatic and the most triumphant words ever uttered in this world!

new and perfect order of His humanity, but into the Absolute Perfection of His transcendent Life. For, the Sacraments are His means of extending, or of causing to emerge, within the time process of our contingent and continuing world history, that which, since the Resurrection, now has been rendered absolute and timeless within the Life of God.

We have already noticed how Our Lord, during His lifetime, began consolidating about Himself a small group of people, first the disciples, and later, a somewhat larger number, the "little flock,"¹⁶ as He called them, of His chosen friends. These, under His care and guidance, had been knit together into a Society which was His, forged into a social organism which was the nucleus of the social extension of His humanity, and which was thus fit to become the initial body of His Church. He had taught these people, He had led them to love Him within an exceedingly close human attachment, He had inspired them for future action as this would be revealed and opened to them. He had filled them with an enthusiastic hope.

This initial group of people was, in fact, the first living seed of Our Lord's social humanity. Our Lord had come upon its members as separate individuals within His environmental world. He had singled them out and summoned them to follow Him, to throw in their lot with His life here upon this earth. They had responded to this call freely and without any compulsion of their rational intelligences. But once this free human response had been made, those who had thus submitted themselves had found that they were ordered into a living social whole, informed with a creative life principle infinitely beyond their own unaided human potentialities of achievement. They had found their little group informed, both through and within all its social inter-relationships, by the living creative power of the Divine Logos, spreading outward from Our Lord's own central perfection.

We may note, in passing, that Our Lord's personal method of engrafting the first individuals into His socially extending humanity, was through a simple act of a spoken summons. He met Simon and Andrew, the fishermen, by the sea of Galilee, and

¹⁶ Luke 12:32.

said to them "Follow me." They immediately left their nets and obeyed Him. A little later He gave the same summons to two other fishermen who also joined His company. An exactly similar summons was given later to an unnamed disciple. The same words from Our Lord's lips came to the ears of Levi the tax-gatherer, who made the same response; and likewise to Philip of Bethsaida at another time.¹⁷

Within the act of this spoken summons, together with the response to it of the individuals in question, we can discern a tremendous thing taking place. We can discern what had previously been an isolated bit of human "raw material," found in the disordered world of Our Lord's environment, being seized upon by the Divine life-force, and being appropriated thus into the latter's own organism. We can see the kind of thing happening to Simon and Andrew, to Levi and the rest, that happens to an atom of carbon when it is seized upon by the organism of a growing vine and creatively incorporated into its living structure. The creative power of the Divine Logos began in this fashion the process of clothing Himself with a reperfected social humanity.

In addition, this newly growing human social body of Our Lord was itself endowed by Him with the same creative power which He had exercised in the calling of His first disciples in order that it, too, might incorporate additional human material out of its world environment. However, the simple summons of "Follow me," which sufficed for Him as an individual, was subsequently enshrined by Him for social use in the Sacramental Rite of Baptism. We shall presently discuss the Sacrament of Baptism at greater length.¹⁸ It may be said here, however, that it is in essence a symbolic ceremony bestowed upon the Body of Our Lord's Church by Him, which enables her to incorporate additional members into herself by exerting upon them that same power which He exerted upon His original disciples, by means of His personal individual summons. Baptism is, as it were, the Sacramental social extension of Our Lord's direct, in-

¹⁷ Cf. respectively: Matt. 4:19-20; Matt. 4:21-23; Matt. 8:22; Mark 2:14; John 1:43.

¹⁸ For a more extensive discussion of this Sacrament, see Chapter X.

dividual "Follow me." It is worthy of notice in this connection, that the Sacrament of Baptism was, from the beginning, used exclusively by the body of His social humanity and never by Himself alone.¹⁹

In any case, whether the new members of Our Lord's company had been knit into its organism by His immediate personal act, or whether they had been incorporated by the expanding body of His social humanity acting equally creatively through its Sacrament of Baptism, all the actions, experiences and relationships emerging among the members of that group continually added a fresh and ever-enlarging content to Our Lord's own re-created humanity. Therefore, when, in the end, He died upon the Cross, when He rose from the dead and finally withdrew into His Godhead, He took with Him, as it were, more than a mere individual Self. He then conveyed, beyond the grave and out of time and into eternity, not only the purely personal accomplishments and achievements of His individual life, but also the whole accompanying organic structure which had creatively accrued, as it were, in the growth and development of His "little flock" up to that final point.

After Our Lord's Ascension, the disciples and those others who had been immediately associated with His earthly experiences must have been the first ones to realize that He had actually gathered up within Himself, at His Crucifixion, all those ordered, intimate, human social relationships which, up to that individually terminal moment, He had been forming with them in their world. They must have come to understand that He had knit all this portion of their corporate earthly lives, their experiences, their affections, their enthusiasms and hopes and plans, the close personal bonds between Him and themselves, that he had knit all these things into His humanity as an ordered element of His very Self; and that now, after His Ascension, He therefore held all this content of His humanity within Himself in God.

This must have been a very marvellous knowledge as it

¹⁹ John 4:1-2. It is here reported that more disciples were being baptized into the company of Our Lord than were being baptized by John. But it is explicitly stated that *Jesus Himself baptized not*. Only the disciples employed the Sacramental Rite. Our Lord had no need to employ the Sacraments.

emerged within the post-Ascension experience of the disciples. They themselves, to be sure, were left behind in the natural world. Nevertheless, in so far as they had been creatively knit together with Our Lord in His human life, this corresponding portion of their own human achievements had already been conveyed into, and received within, that absolutely perfected state of Being into which He had now withdrawn. Upon the Cross and in the Ascension He had conveyed not only His single individual humanity into eternity, but He had drawn them also, at least in part, beyond the gate of the grave. For whither He had gone, there had He taken within Himself whatever of other human lives had entered into those relationships which He had perfected during the period of His earthly accomplishments. The members of His social humanity, whom He left alive and continuing His creative action together after His Ascension, found themselves to be men who were, of course, still in nature and in time. Yet, at the same time, they also had a very considerable part of the substance of their earthly lives already conveyed into super-nature and out of time. Much of their contingent accomplishment within the social humanity of Our Lord had now been received into the level of the Absolute. The disciples must have discovered that they were a body of people the substance of whose natural lives was already partly transubstantiated into the Substance of Our Lord's Ascended Life; for in so far as they had during His earthly lifetime been knit together with Him in His human nature, by just so much were they now conveyed into His Divine Nature.

After Our Lord's Ascension, however, all direct, immediate relationships with Him, as a human individual within the natural world of men's material lives, had obviously ceased to be possible. Our Lord was no longer present in the flesh among His disciples. On the other hand, the natural lives of His former human associates continued upon the natural level of the world. Furthermore, other people, who had never so much as seen Our Lord during His earthly life, began to be baptized into the company of His still surviving friends. His social humanity continued to extend itself creatively, ordering the world into itself, as it had begun to do during His earthly lifetime.

All the additional re-created perfections of the disciples' continuing corporate lives, and of countless other subsequent lives within the same organic social structure of Our Lord's humanity, ceased not to add their ever widening content to the perfected order of that humanity.

Now these post-Ascension achievements on the part of Our Lord's social body were necessarily subject to the very same limitations which are to be discerned within every perfection which is achieved upon the level of our world alone. That is, the post-Ascension social humanity of Our Lord was being perfected under the conditions of a still persisting environmental disorder, and therefore, precisely in the manner of His individual humanity, this social humanity was necessarily contingent, finite and mortal. His *pre*-Ascension humanity, both individual and social, had now, it is true, been transubstantiated out of these limitations into the Absolute, the Universal and the Eternal. However, since the Cross and the Ascension were now events of a past history, the question must have arisen in the disciples' minds as to how the growing content of their own *post*-Ascension lives within Our Lord's humanity was to be similarly transubstantiated. They found the answer to this problem, not only for their own lives, but for all future lives within the Church, in the Sacrament of Our Lord's Body and Blood, the Blessed Sacrament of the Church's Altar, which Our Lord had bestowed upon them corporately before His Crucifixion, while He was still present with them in the flesh.

On the very last night of Our Lord's life among His earthly friends, the night before He was betrayed to death upon the Cross at the hands of His chaotic environmental world, He gathered together the twelve most intimate members of His social body, for a final communal supper. After this meal was finished, He took other bread and wine. He then gave thanks to God over these things, doubtless employing a traditional Jewish form of blessing and thanksgiving. Then, immediately after blessing these simple articles of food and drink, He distributed them to His disciples, saying with the giving of the Bread: "This is my Body." And with the giving of the Cup of Wine: "This is my Blood." He then added that they should

keep repeating this Act whenever they thus came together, as a "Memorial"²⁰ of Him.

In this simple and homely, but none the less solemn manner, there was established the great Sacrament which, by Our Lord's intention, was destined to play a central and vital part in the post-Ascension history of His socially extending humanity. As a matter of fact, this first Blessing of the Bread and Wine was itself, partly, a prophetic event. The life, of which it was destined to be both the Memorial and the means of its active extension, was itself not yet complete. Our Lord was still to be crucified; He was still to rise from the grave; He was still to ascend into heaven. In other words, He was still to convey that very Body and Blood, of which He now spoke as typifying His completely and finally perfected humanity, out of the level of the created world, and into the level of the Being of its Creator. He was still to consummate the conveyance of the substance of His human nature into the Substance of His Divine Nature; for this would be finally accomplished only when He returned to the Being of the Godhead, whence He had proceeded at the beginning of His Incarnation. All these subsequent events, together with their whole import, remained, at the time of the event of the Last Supper, to be included within it; or better, perhaps, to be injected into the content of that Memorial which He instituted before the actual death of His human body on the Cross.

However, after the great culminating events of Our Lord's human life, after His Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension, the disciples found themselves in possession of a Sacramental Rite involving bread and wine, which was something vastly more than a mere Memorial of the history of Our Lord's human life, as this word "memorial" is ordinarily understood. They discovered that, in calling the bread and wine His Body and Blood, He had in truth meant very precisely, very exactly, the words which He then spoke, and in a far from merely figurative or allegorical manner. The Memorial of the "Last" Supper, when once it had come to include the Cross, the Resurrection

²⁰ Greek ἀνάμνησις. The earliest written account which we possess of the Institution of the Eucharist is given by St. Paul, I Cor. 11:23-25.

and the Ascension, became the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*. To employ again the traditional philosophical terminology, the natural substance of the rite of the blessing of the bread and wine, an event which took place in the Upper Room on the final evening of Our Lord's earthly life, was a particular element within the whole substance of Our Lord's human accomplishment, such that, a little later, when it had been conveyed by Him through the Cross into His Divine Nature, it became transubstantiated into the Substance of the Sacrament of the Catholic Altar. It thus became the answer to the very problem which we have just discussed. It became the Divinely provided means whereby all the creative accomplishments accruing within the natural body of His post-Ascension social humanity might, throughout all future human history, be conveyed into His Divine Nature, just as the pre-Ascension content of that humanity had already been so conveyed by Him upon the Cross. It became the Sacramental extension within His social body of His individual Sacrificial Act. It became the Church's Holy Sacrifice which, as the first authoritative Anglican Liturgy in the English tongue has it, "is commonly called the Mass."²¹

Thus, for Our Lord's Church, a door is opened in heaven. The members of His continuing social humanity may now, by His provision, gather themselves together, bringing forward to Him some simple offerings of food and drink, some gifts of bread and wine. These material things, simple as they are, contain within themselves, summed up in the history of their origins and developments, the relationships and the achievements of the natural lives of those who bring them forward. In other words, they stand as objective material representations of the human beings who have prepared them. Furthermore, being offered, as they always are in the case of the Church's Sacrament, corporately by the social body of the Church's members, they sum up, or contain, a newly created portion of the content of Our Lord's growing social humanity. They are the objective representations of fresh achievements in the re-creation of our fallen creation upon the level of our material world; they set forth a continuation of the reperfecting process which began

²¹ The First English Prayer Book, A.D. 1549.

in Our Lord's individual humanity itself. For the wheat from which the bread is made has always been planted and grown in the farm lands of the world. It has been sown and reaped, gathered into barns and threshed by countless thousands of men and women. The machinery used in our age for these purposes draws into the ambit of this preparation thousands more who are employed in the forests, the factories and foundries of the land. Besides all these things, the flour for the bread has been marketed. Workers in advertising agencies, brokerage houses, transportation lines and ships, grain elevators, storage warehouses and bakeries, have all played their appointed parts in the preparation of the gift of a simple fragment of bread.

Our forbears, whose lives were nothing like so widely organized economically as our own, and who were more apt than are we today to be themselves actually present within the operations of the sowing of the wheat, the grinding of the flour, and the baking of the bread, would have felt the implications of all these related facts in the social history of a piece of bread much more vividly than do we. It is a curious paradox that, as our productive economy becomes more complicated and its net more widely spread, individuals within its system tend to become increasingly specialized, and usually feel themselves not more in touch with, but rather, more isolated from, the cooperative activities of their fellowmen. However, it requires but a slight knowledge of our economic system and a minimum use of the imagination, even in this modern world, to see how closely we are all involved in the preparation of our offerings of bread. A particular gift of bread may be said to sum up the whole of our lives down to the point of that particular offering. Furthermore, the wine which we offer, which might be thought of as containing the fire, the zest, the enthusiasm, the joyousness, the *élan* of life, always emerges from a correspondingly long and wide process of preparation.

Thus, His chosen friends in every generation organically knit together within the extended humanity of His Catholic Church, as in Our Lord's own human lifetime, bring the re-created, natural world of their activities, their experiences, their hopes and fears, in short, their very corporate selves, into His Presence.

Then, reperfected into His *human* perfection, they lift themselves up, through His appointed Sacrament, in bread and wine to Him. Here in this solemn Act, under the Covenant made in that Last Supper before Calvary, Our Lord receives these fresh human creations from the hands of His Church. He takes them as additional elements into His humanity, continuing that re-creative Process which He began in Himself and among His friends during His earthly sojourn. He thus makes it possible for us, through the renewed presentation of our lives within the Church, to prepare anew a body of flesh and blood in which He can continue to clothe Himself in every generation. He takes all these ever-accumulating new elements of the Church's growing content into His own human body; and we, by bringing forward added elements of our own, are permitted to supply something which, as St. Paul says,²² "fills up that which is behind of"—that is to say, adds something further to the content, although, of course, not to the *Order* of—Our Lord's humanity.

It must here be pointed out that these added human materials of ours are unfortunately never perfectly re-ordered at our own hands in advance of *our* offering. That is a thing which Our Lord alone, as we have seen, could, and still can, accomplish. He alone has that perfect Order which can receive our disorder by bringing the latter into His own organic perfection. But it is presupposed that, at every offering of the Holy Sacrifice, we have always already done our own best, through the help which God supplies in all our life endeavors. In other words, at every Mass we come forward with the *best possible* bread and wine which we, granted our human liability to sin and failure, have been able to procure. Under these conditions Our Lord receives our gifts, as He of old received the spreading social creation of the lives of His disciples. He then covers whatever human failures and defects our offerings still contain with the atoning perfection of His own accomplishment. For, our human gifts, unlike His own, are not only contingent, but are also disordered through our human frailty. But He perfects, upon the level of nature, these still disordered gifts, our human best, so that they become available to His further purpose for us.

²² Col. 1:24.

This further purpose is nothing less than our conveyance, our transubstantiation, into His ascended Life. For, having perfected us within our world by taking us into His humanity and by accepting us in our offerings of bread and wine, Himself now "further" Incarnate, as it were, in these newly added gifts taken from our lives, Our Lord turns now with this increased content of His human perfection, to the Cross. Here, lifting us up with Himself in that Eternal Sacrifice, He draws us with Himself beyond Calvary, beyond a mere newly perfected order within our world, into the Absolute and Eternal Perfection of His Risen and Ascended Being. The substances of the created bread and wine, that is, the substances of our human lives perfected into His humanity and offered under the forms of bread and wine, are transubstantiated into the Substances of His Body and Blood, united to Him in the Uncreated Godhead—just as His individual, contingent and mortal humanity was long ago taken into an Absolute, Universal and Eternal Perfection.²³ That is,

²³ The word *substance* is, of course, a word of technical philosophy. It is a word which has been given an exact meaning, and whose precise definition has been highly polished by over two thousand years of careful philosophical use. Since it is the word which all Christians take upon their lips every time they say the Nicene Creed, and thus announce a deep Christian verity concerning the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, namely that God the Son is of "One Substance with the Father," it would seem essential to a rational Christian life that those who employ the word should possess an adequate knowledge of what they are talking about.

One fact, at least, must be kept prominently in mind. The philosophical concept of *substance* is not the same as that of *matter*. If it were otherwise, God could not properly be referred to in terms of *substance*, since He is certainly pure Spirit. And that is also the reason why it is as proper to refer, for example, to the *substance* of a human life, as it is to refer to the *substance* of a piece of bread. The substance of the bread (or of the life) is not its material content, but that which *subsists* wherever the bread (or the life) is, (Latin *subsistere*) in such wise that it *sustains* (Latin *substare*) in being, the additional qualities (or accidents) with which the bread (or the life) in question is invested.

The word *substance*, in its proper philosophical use, is a term which is necessary in any clear exposition of the truths of deep Reality and of existence in general. It is particularly useful to us in all analyses of the nature of change and process in our space and time. It should always be borne in mind that the term *substance*—together with, for that matter, all the language of philosophy—is one which is not to be confused with the terminology of physical science. Philosophical terms furnish exact ways of talking about, or of describing, that which is known to be true in the deepest realities of all experience.

For a compact and precise discussion of the meaning of the word *substance*, as it is intended to be employed in the present text, the reader is referred to M. Jacques Maritain's *Introduction to Philosophy*, English Translation by E. I. Watkin, Sheed and Ward, London, 1930. Chap. VI, pp. 217-226. M. Maritain

in precisely the same manner that the taking of Our Lord's individual Manhood into God was consummated two thousand years ago in the Sacrifice of the Cross, so now, the taking of His growing humanity into His ascended Being within the Godhead is effected at every Mass, at every offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar.

Therefore, it is clear that this Sacrifice of the Mass is far from being a mere "nude commemoration of the Cross."²⁴ But still less is it in any sense whatever a *repetition* of that "full, perfect and sufficient Sacrifice"²⁵ which Our Lord made, historically speaking, two thousand years ago. We must recall again that the "One Oblation of Himself once offered"²⁶ of Our Lord upon the Cross, while being an event at the close of a single, perfected human life now past, and therefore, in this context, finished once and for all, is also an event taken into the Life of God, and therefore, within this transcendent context, not in time but in eternity. Hence, of the One Sacrifice of Our Lord's humanity here within the history of this earth, it is permissible to say that it *was* accomplished. On the other hand, of that same Sacrifice present in the Absolute Perfection of God, it is necessary to say that it *is* to all eternity. Unfortunately, it is impossible to speak adequately of eternal facts in human terms, since the latter must, in the nature of things, always involve a reference to our time process. However, from the point of view of ourselves, who still remain within the succession of historical events, it is perhaps permissible to refer to Our Lord's Sacrifice upon the Cross, to His Resurrection and Ascension, as events "still happening," "continually going on," or at any rate, as having in no sense ceased to be. Thus, while these historical events can never be repeated in any sort of duplication at a later time in our history, nevertheless, since they are now eternally present, transcending our universe of space and time, they can be repeatedly *unveiled* in later history. That which eternally *is* appears to us not as a

defines *substance* (p. 214) as "a thing or nature whose property is to exist by itself, or in virtue of itself (*per se*) and not in another thing." Several of the phrases of this note are quoted directly from M. Maritain's text.

²⁴ Council of Trent, Sess. XXII, de Sacrif. Missae, Can. 3.

²⁵ Canon of the American Prayer Book Liturgy.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

past event, but as a continuing process. Therefore, that which Our Lord once accomplished can emerge into our history over and over, time and time again. That is, Our Lord began the Process of re-ordering the world, and this Process, being now taken into His transcendent Being, can be made to appear again, objectively, as an event in time, as often as He wills it.

That is precisely the provision which Our Lord has made for His Church in the Mass. The Mass is the unveiling in time, rhythmically, through all succeeding ages, of the re-creating Process initiated by Our Lord, which, in *history* culminates in the Sacrifice of the Cross. The first or initial content of the perfected order of Our Lord's new living creation, was contributed by Him when, at the end of His human life, He put His own entire perfected humanity into it. But this initial content is increased and enriched by Him, as He emerges within the gifts and offerings which we bring forward at every recurring Mass. Our Lord, then, continues His Incarnation with the materials of our lives. And thus, all that we bring forward in our offerings of bread and wine at any given Mass is received out of the disorder of our world, and is taken by Our Lord, first into the perfected order of His humanity as He clothes Himself anew in our generation with *our* flesh and blood. Then, beyond this, our bread and wine, thus perfected into the content of His humanity, are sacramentally transubstantiated from the order of His human nature into the Order of His Divine Nature, by means of the identical Process which was initiated in His lifetime. Thus also is our humanity united with His, taken out of the limitation, the contingency and mortality inevitable in any order still within the environment of our disordered world, into the Absolute and Eternal Order of Our Lord's Godhead.

And so, at every Mass all those who assist at its offering with unequivocal intention are, in the perfected, accumulated accomplishments and the re-created orders of their common lives, with all the content of those lives accruing up to the very moment of the offering, made eternal, as all this ordered structure of accomplishment, both individual and social, is taken into Our Lord's transcendent Order. Our lives, incorporated organi-

cally into the structure of Our Lord's humanity, are received into the level of the Divine Being.

On the other hand, we who assist at the offering of any given Mass, while the transcendent Calvary is in fact unveiled before us in the consecrated Bread and Wine, while we prostrate ourselves in adoration as a door is opened into heaven's eternity, are not ourselves "straightway in the spirit" as St. John records of his experience in the Isle of Patmos.²⁷ That re-created order which has already been achieved in our lives is indeed conveyed by Our Lord into the content of His Ascended Life; but we ourselves, remaining still in the flesh, are not yet summoned by a Voice to "come up hither";²⁸ nor are we, within that Transubstantiation, swept miraculously beyond the Altar, out of the natural world. It is probable that we have still much left to be done within the remaining future of our present lives, and we must all of us, at the conclusion of any particular Mass, return once more to creative activity within the world of Our Lord's humanity.

It is for this necessity that Our Lord has made an amazing further provision. We have come forward with our bread and wine, prepared to give ourselves utterly as these our offerings are placed on the Altar.²⁹ We intend to keep nothing back, and ask, in our own right, for nothing whatever in return. Our Lord graciously receives our gifts upon these terms, conveying them into His Godhead. But, for the fact that we have to return to further action in a world of time and space, Our Lord has also made adequate provision. He responds to this need by giving Himself back to us. Furthermore, since we are now, by means of the Holy Sacrifice, incorporated together into His Risen Life, we thus receive not only Himself, but, in addition, *our own selves too*, given at His hands, back into our own hands for our further keeping. This great Response of Our Lord, this re-giving of Himself to us, and with this giving, this re-entrust-

²⁷ Rev. 1:9-10; 4:1-2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ The present-day custom of collecting money at the time of the "Offertory" greatly obscures this essential point. In the primitive Church the Faithful brought their own provision of bread and wine for the Mass. It would be well if this custom could be in some manner recaptured.

ing of our perfected and transubstantiated selves to our own selves again, is called the Holy Communion.³⁰ The Holy Communion follows the Sacrificial Act of the Mass. We receive again directly from Our Lord that which was our bread and wine, the substances of our achieved new order within our world of His humanity, now transubstantiated into the Substances of His Risen Body and Blood. Thus does He ever re-entrust Himself in His transcendent Perfection into our keeping, in order that we, in union with Him, may carry His life once more out into the world, true bearers of Christ among men; until, through the added grace of this Gift we may prepare fresh offerings of new bread and wine, new treasures of human life ordered according to our utmost capacities, new creations of a perfected humanity culled out of our disordered environments, for our next successive Mass.

When we go forth from His Altar it is, of course, Our Lord alone who gives us the power to continue this creative re-ordering work within the world of His extending humanity. This is another aspect of the Holy Communion which we must now consider. We are sent abroad from Mass to prepare fresh offerings of bread and wine, to create, that is, on the natural level, something further which may be found worthy ultimately of reception by Our Lord into His transcendent Perfection. However, whatever creative ability we possess for selection and re-arrangement of materials out of the chaotic world environment and into His social humanity on the level of our natural lives, can come to us only from God, who is our own Creator. We, since we are ourselves created beings, can in our turn create

³⁰ It should be noted at this point that the Protestant tendency to view the Mass as if it consisted solely of the Holy Communion, over-emphasizes our "getting" at the grave risk of forgetting that, as a condition of our Holy Communion, we are first of all called upon to give; for, it is precisely with the content of *our* gifts, as, in the beginning, with the content of His own natural humanity, that Our Lord chooses to work, in preparing for the bestowal of *His* Gift upon us. In other words, there is evident here the danger, previously often referred to, of reversing the direction of the Incarnation Process. Instead of Our Lord clothing Himself with our lives, He is made to seem chiefly to come down into our present level of existence, a procedure which may "help" us, but, which, from the point of view of His new creation and without our prior offering of our bread and wine as the vehicles of this descent, leaves us precisely where we were before, frustrated within a disordered world.

nothing, in the sense of re-ordering the world into Our Lord's humanity, except in so far as God shares with us the necessary power. It is true that as human beings we are endowed from the beginning with a certain rational, creative potentiality. We have already seen that this potentiality of ours is the very meaning of what it is to be made in the image of God. This was that third definition of the word *creation*, which, at an earlier point, we said could be applied uniquely to man.³¹ However, we may also recall that man's natural endowment of creative power, while sufficient to *maintain* order within a still perfect creation, is utterly insufficient to cope with that disorder which man himself has introduced into it. Therefore, man's creative capacity, if it is to function adequately within a fallen world, must continually be further stimulated, be further fulfilled by the power of God who is its source.

In the Holy Communion, because we receive the Gift of Our Lord's own Self, we thereby receive Him who, as the Eternal Logos, is the very primal principle of creative ordering power, "by Whom all things were made."³² Correspondingly then, within the Blessed Sacrament is the primal Substance of whatever ordering power or "creativity" we ourselves may possess; and this Substance is here re-impacted to us by Our Lord, under forms which we can reappropriate into our lives, as we return for continuing activity in the everyday world. Within the consecrated Elements of Our Lord's Body and Blood there resides the very Substance from which our own creative, free and rational wills must themselves proceed, if our wills are to be in any degree identifiable with, or conformable to, the will of God for our earthly activities and work. Therefore, to receive the Blessed Sacrament is in very truth to receive a new creation for ourselves, in the third sense in which we have defined it. It is to be re-created as rational human beings, or better, to be entrusted again with our re-created selves, made anew in the image of God. It is to receive periodically, for fresh and recurring tasks and purposes in the disordered world environment, an immediate and sufficient reinforcement of our original, hu-

³¹ Chap. III, p. 69.

³² Nicene Creed.

man, Divinely bestowed endowment of free, creative power.

We here touch the heart of a great mystery. It were unwise to venture too far in any attempt at intellectual analysis of Our Lord's operation within His Sacramental Gift. Nevertheless, we may reverently permit ourselves one more consideration. We have just said that in the Blessed Sacrament Our Lord confers Himself upon us, under forms which we may in some way *re-appropriate* into our continuing, earthly lives. On the other hand, this seems too daring an expression; for it is scarcely conceivable that human beings, who themselves receive from God alone whatever ordering ability, whatever share of creative power they possess, could appropriate unaided a further share of this Power Itself. In other words, it would be a strange arrogance to suggest that a human creature might *appropriate* his Creator to himself. Only God, it would seem, can be thought of as thus appropriating a share in that which is of the Substance of Himself in His eternal Son, even though Our Lord graciously emerges before us within the Blessed Sacrament. However, God the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, both can, and to some extent, always does dwell in the heart of every individual man and woman who invites Him to enter there. We may therefore venture to think that it is the Holy Spirit within each of us, as we approach our Holy Communions, who appropriates for us an individual portion, so to speak, of the Divine creative power offered in the Blessed Sacrament, appropriating this according to each human being's individual needs and to a degree corresponding to his actual capacity for receiving it.

This is why before every Mass the Catholic Church, in her books of the Divine Liturgy, directs us to pray that God may send down upon us His Holy Spirit, His active and appropriating Spirit, to dwell within our hearts. We bow ourselves at that awful moment which then follows when our bread and wine are lifted up by the Priest upon the Altar and become, at their consecration, through the emergence of the Divine Logos in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, that new creation which the Holy Spirit within us can appropriate, upon which God the Holy Spirit will presently act on our behalf. For, as we have

said, Calvary is here unveiled, and Our Lord Transcendent clothes Himself in His Creation. Obviously this is an Act performed by God, independent of any belief or faith which we, as individuals, may have concerning it. At every Mass Our Lord takes creation into Himself by an Act which is His alone. It is He who takes the initiative in His continuing Incarnation. It is He who "first loves us,"³³ before we can even think of Him. And thus it needs no contribution of our human faith to make Our Lord's Presence real within His Sacrament of transubstantiated Bread and Wine. Nevertheless, we ourselves, subsequently at our Holy Communions can be said, in an accurate sense, to receive Him "by faith." Not that it is our faith which brings His Presence there.³⁴ It should be clear by this time that such a notion is very far from the truth. But, in a very true sense, it is by faith that we receive Him; because by this is meant that it is indeed by faith that we open our hearts to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and it is only through Him, as the sole appropriating Agent in our reception of the Sacrament, that we may hope to receive Our Lord back into our human lives, as we partake of His Body and Blood.³⁵

³³ I John 4:19.

³⁴ Note St. Paul's warning of the danger of that Presence to those who made their Holy Communions unworthily, "not discerning the Lord's Body." I Cor. 11:29.

³⁵ It seems appropriate here to call particular attention to the fact that the consecration of the Bread and Wine at the Altar is a distinctly creative act. It is an Act of God, ordering nature into His humanity and then, by a Process of Transubstantiation, ordering His humanity into His transcendent Being, in which state, as the Nicene Creed says, "He sitteth at the right hand of the Father." According to the same Creed, it is the Divine Logos, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, "by whom all things were made." It is therefore God the Son who ever acts in whatever creative processes issue, by the Divine will, from God the Father. This creative Office is not attributed to God the Holy Ghost. It would, therefore, seem that any so-called "Epiclesis," or Invocation of the Holy Spirit as a Consecrating Agent within the Mass, is difficult to harmonize with the doctrines concerning the Divine Persons which the Nicene Creed sets forth.

The ancient usage of the Western Church which, at least since the fifth century, has excluded an Invocation of the Holy Spirit from her Consecration Prayer at the Holy Sacrifice, is thoroughly sound both from a theological and from a philosophical point of view. The Divine Logos is the Person who achieves the consecration, because that is an Act of Creation. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, enkindles the hearts and minds of rational beings, and He may well be invoked, that He may enter the hearts of those who offer the Sacrifice and who are to receive their Holy Communions. There should be, therefore,

Finally, then, the Sacrifice of the Mass, with its following Holy Communion, is an event which is, in a sense, entirely held within the Being of the Blessed Trinity. We, as human creatures, partake of our Holy Communions by being, as it were, entrained in the Triune Relationships of the Divine Being. For it is through the appropriation by God the Holy Spirit, dwelling within us, of the eternal ordering power of God the Son, source of our own new creation now present in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, that the image of God which is ours is continually revitalized. And it is thus that we ourselves receive a further, adequate capacity to order the disordered materials of human life, in the fallen world, into a growing, living organism, following the pattern of Christ's humanity, thus fit to be conveyed ultimately into Our Lord's own Absolute and Eternal Order. It follows that, in the Blessed Sacrament, we begin already here on earth to enter with Him into that place whither He has gone; and, as He receives our ever-recurring offerings of bread and wine, He receives our ever-expanding, reperfected natural lives into an Eternal Order, fitted, beyond all time and space, for the heavenly mansions of the sons of God.

an Epiclesis (if any) for the congregation at Mass; but not with an intention of making this a part of the consecration of the Bread and Wine.

Many Anglican Liturgies, including the American, now contain the latter dubious kind of Epiclesis. These Anglican Invocations stem from the efforts of the so-called Non-juror English Bishops of the eighteenth century to restore what they doubtless thought, according to the sources available to them, was a genuinely primitive usage. Our Western Epiclesis (in distinction from that of the Eastern Church, which has, at any rate, a centuries-long tradition behind it), results from a relatively recent interest in liturgical archeology, and it cuts clean across the universal tradition of the undivided Western Church. One of the best modern authorities in this matter (Felix L. Cirlot, in his book *The Early Eucharist*, S.P.C.K., 1939), seems to have demonstrated that the particular type of Epiclesis which has been thus "restored" to the Anglican family of Liturgies, through the researches of the Non-jurors and others following them, has not even the advantage of being truly primitive. In this case, we may contend that our own American Epiclesis not only rests upon a doubtful theological and philosophical basis, but that it is not even archeologically sound.

VIII

THE MASS AND THE NATURAL WORLD

A LITTLE reflection will show how much depends upon that Sacramental extension of the Incarnation which we have been discussing in the preceding chapter, and how practical and far-reaching in its implications is that Catholic view of the Mass and the Holy Communion which we have outlined.

The Sacrament of the Altar, since it mediates the Incarnation itself to the world, is the Sign of a twofold Process, and neither one of its aspects may be neglected or obscured without grave danger of disaster to the whole. The Sacrament, being in its visible and sensible aspects present in this material world, begins and ends as did Our Lord's own human life within the world of men and the affairs of everyday life. Just as for the first requisite of His Incarnation, the Son of God took a human body to Himself, so likewise, the initial requisite of every Mass is a little bread and wine, a social, human body prepared out of the common lives of those who bring these things forward. We begin with practical and material preparation; and such preparations may not be made uncritically or thoughtlessly. The prerequisite of the Sacrifice of the Cross was a perfected human nature. The prerequisite of the Sacrifice of the Mass is a perfected bread and wine.

It may be replied to this that it is ultimately Our Lord Himself who must perfect even our initial offerings if these are to be made acceptable, and this reply would be true. Nevertheless, Our Lord's atoning action in this regard cannot be thought of as carried on in the face of our own heedless negligence. He will not perfect our shortcomings if we, for our part, retain apathetic intentions and rebellious wills. Our failures, if they occur, must be failures caused by human deficiency, not disorders in fallen creation deliberately left untouched. The results of genuine weakness will, it is true, be made good by Him; but we may not presume upon His mercy to cover the fruits of

wilful human laziness, selfishness or egotistical cowardice. We may not tempt the Lord God.¹ Our Lord's atoning completion of the re-creation of the human gifts brought forward by His social body in order to make them worthy of His Incarnation, presupposes the fact that His living human members have first done their own best, and have used to the utmost that creative ordering capacity which He gives them both for their personal and for their common social lives. "If thou bring thy gift to the Altar," He said, "and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the Altar and go thy way; first be reconciled with thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."² There is here no hint that Our Lord can be called upon to introduce order, by an overruling act, into a chaos which men and women can, with a reasonable justice, be expected to remedy in advance.

It is in the preparation of their offerings, in this becoming "reconciled" with their brothers, in a far wider sense than that of merely making up some petty, personal quarrels, that the children of the Church are bound to come into sharp and even critical conflict with the present disorders of their environments; because it is in this preparation that the re-creating Process of the Incarnation has its initial stage. Here the Process of Catholic re-ordering of the world makes its first or front-line attack upon disorder.

Therefore, before we, who are the responsible creative agents of the Incarnation upon the level of the natural portion of its Process, can venture to place our bread and wine upon the Altar, we must question very penetratingly the quality of the sources from which these offerings are drawn. This kind of questioning, as we have also already indicated,³ should begin by self-examination on the part of every individual who cooperates in the presentation of the common gifts for every intended Sacrifice. Bad individual, voluntary acts, wrong choices in the past, neglect of personal prayer life, defective or evil interior dispositions, faulty personal intentions for the future, need of

¹ Deut. 6:16; Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12.

² Matt. 5:23-24.

³ Chap. IV, pp. 123ff.

course to be corrected. These faults need to be left aside and to be repented of; and amends must be made, if this is humanly possible, before any individual may dare to approach the Altar.

On the other hand, no private self-examination can be adequately made by an individual if he persists in thinking himself as a unit apart from the society in which he finds himself. Much more is involved in all bread and wine than highly personal and private elements of individual, interior lives. Indeed, the separation of personal interior life from its external social contexts is both unreal and artificial. Such separation may be permitted on occasion for purposes of private self-examination; but when this separation is made, it must continually be borne in mind that no individual can possibly lead a socially insulated life. Therefore, even the bread and wine which we bring forward as individual gifts emerge always from that complex social process to which we have referred, and this process itself requires criticism.

Whence is this bread? we must always ask, and whence this wine? Was the wheat sown and reaped by men and women who live free, secure and happy lives in the countrysides of the world? Was the flour ground in mills and carried on trains or ships by workmen who live under conditions of a maximum social justice? Did the workmen who handled it receive a wage which corresponds to the utmost which is possible when considered in relation to the ascertained maximum capacity of our lands and of our available technical means? Were all the men and women so involved free to live lives for which they can in any full sense be considered responsible and accountable in the sight of Our Lord? Or are they even now forced into evil patterns of action in the world, with their individual wills unnecessarily overruled by an economic system which needs only Christian analysis and correlative action to correct? Are restraints imposed upon them by others who have power neither by any natural or God-given right, nor through superior individual worth, but rather through the astutely acquired or chance ownership of natural resources and technical means of production? If the workingmen and women who have prepared our bread for us find little or no economic jus-

tice in their own lives, if a true freedom within the world of everyday choices is arrogated to the relatively few who are rich and therefore powerful in our present social order, then this bread cannot be accepted as a fit offering, except under violent protest on the part of all faithful Catholics.

In the world of today, further questions must be asked. How have the wheat, the flour and the bread itself been brought upon the market? How have these materials been sold? Can it be thought that wheat, which has been made the matter of professional brokerage operations in "Wheat Pits" and other centers of speculative trading, which has been used for the enrichment of a few individuals at the expense of the many in operations which have only the cloak of secular legality to distinguish them from those of great gambling casinos, can such wheat be brought complacently to the Altar of the Church? And how have the materials of our bread been brought before the public for purchase? Has there been truthful and informative advertising, or have inferior materials been foisted upon us with that farrago of lying nonsense which is characteristic of modern "high-pressure" salesmanship? And analogous questions must also be put concerning the history of the preparation of the wine which we bring, especially now in this present time when so many workers, in the countries where wine-grapes grow, are oppressed by hateful economic tyrannies enthroned in political Dictatorships, and when they cower under menace of wars.

Such questions, obvious as they should be to all, need not here be multiplied. It is clear that we can bring such deficient gifts to the Altar only in fear and trembling, as it were, begging God's forbearance, beating the breast, and asking Our Lord to perfect and to receive them through His Atonement, only until such time as we may improve their quality. This He is willing to do. He perfects our present imperfections through His all-encompassing Sacrifice, but only upon the condition that, as He returns our accepted offerings to us in our Holy Communion, we shall determine, with the help of His grace there imparted and quite regardless of the cost to those of us who now lead comfortable lives in the outside world, to better the

quality of our gifts at each succeeding Mass. For such bread and wine as we can now obtain within our present economic system can be placed by Catholics upon their Altars only under conditions of firm resolution to eliminate within the world those intolerable disorders which, so long as our present economic system is permitted to endure, must unavoidably continue to enter into their preparation. And this resolution must be taken no matter what the immediate consequences within a disordered world environment, no matter what the danger of great dislocations in economic and political systems, no matter that our resolution may lead us, through the savage resistance of an unredeemed world, on and up the slopes of Calvary and to the Cross.

On the other hand, the second part of the Process of the Incarnation is no less important than the first, in any complete view of Catholic Sacramental activity. While it is essential, it is nevertheless far from sufficient for our human redemption, that a new order be brought forth only within this world. For as we have now already seen, any such order, even the order of Our Lord's own humanity, remains contingent, finite and mortal so long as it must exist only within the level of the fallen and perishing environment of our creation. It is true that our bread and wine must be perfected in the natural level; but they must also be placed upon the Altar, that they may here be taken by Our Lord into His Risen and Ascended Life. Because, every ordered perfection achieved within a disordered environment has, so long as it remains there, still continually to be maintained in the face of a persisting environmental chaos. Even individual sanctity itself must be maintained over against the chaos of an evil disorder deep within the fallen human heart. Perfected, ordered human achievement, in social as well as in individual, interior experience; values of creative accomplishment in the world of practical activity of every day; as well as values of intellectual endeavor, worship, prayer and contemplation; all must be rescued and relieved from the threatening menace of relapse into chaos. For chaos continues to beat, as it were, at the doors of all order, so long as order is allowed to remain in its midst. Furthermore, those contingent values of

innocent suffering, sorrow and death itself, which as we have noted have their appointed places within the organism of any human perfection achieved in a disordered world environment, must, as Our Lord said, be "turned into joy."⁴ And human defeat, the defeat of the Cross, which must necessarily be present in all perfected bread and wine of our human offerings in the natural world, must be received into the Victory of the Resurrection. Finally, all offerings within our time-process must be made eternal. Perfection in the midst of persisting mortality must be received into an immortal Perfection. For within our world, no matter how much may be achieved by us, all living human values disappear at length into nothingness. The natural universe itself, created as an order taken from primeval chaos, even now is in process of returning inexorably to deadness, to a cold and motionless inactivity, as its present physical energy spreads outward and expends itself in even distribution throughout all space. At the end of that long process of natural development which we call evolution, corresponding to primeval chaos there waits, silently and darkly, an *ultimeval* chaos, to engulf every achievement within our natural world.

Briefly to repeat: our newly ordered offerings must be freed from the danger of being overwhelmed again by the surrounding disorders of the world as we ourselves return to work within it. Their contingent perfections must be taken into Absolute Perfection. And finally, also, they must be rescued from the otherwise inevitable destroying oblivion of history. This kind of complete or Absolute Redemption of our creation is not possible of achievement so long as the substances of our bread and wine, no matter how perfected these may be, remain upon the level of our fallen natural world. They must be transubstantiated into the Substance of the Body and Blood of Our Blessed Lord.

Therefore it is an urgent matter that Catholics perform that function which is placed by Our Lord uniquely in the hands of His Church. The cooperation of non-Catholics and, indeed, non-Christians, may, to some extent, be enlisted in the re-creative preparation of the world's bread and wine for the approach-

⁴ John 16:20.

ing Sacrifice. Furthermore, Catholics should accept such cooperation gratefully and humbly. However, only Catholics who have permitted themselves to be organically appropriated into Our Lord's humanity can come to the Cross, as it is unveiled at the Altar, and there *sacramentally* convey into the Order of Our Lord's transcendent Life that lesser, contingent and created order which, by the creative action of His social body, has been culled from out the natural world. It follows that Catholics view the Sacrifice of the Mass as the central and cardinal focus of all Christian activity. It is the Act whereby are salvaged the values of this world of fleeting time, from out all contingency and from that destroying oblivion which awaits them within the continuing historical process. For "time like an ever-rolling stream bears all its sons away. They fly forgotten as a dream dies at the opening day."⁵ That is true of all created order so long as it remains within the natural world. But it is not true of whatever perfected gifts we succeed in uniting with the Sacrifice of the Cross at Catholic Altars. For all natural perfections which are there lifted up are caught up by God, seized upon by the creative power of His Risen and Ascended Son, transubstantiated into His Body and His Blood, made of one Substance with Himself, saved from a fallen and disordered creation's contingencies and limitations, from out time's destruction into an eternal plane. Thus are Catholics used by God as His agents within the world both for the continuation of and for the completion of the Incarnation of that world. To them it is committed to increase the content of Our Lord's humanity within creation, and then, beyond this, to offer up this spreading, created natural perfection in such wise that its contingent, its continually endangered and its perishable values, shall be taken into Our Lord's Absolute and Eternal Life. The Catholic Church is the appointed Sacramental Body whereby the disordered and mortal content of history is, first, re-ordered in nature, and then, transubstantiated into the Absolute Order of Eternity itself. In this way humanity is continually taken into God; and heaven, through the gateway of the Altar, grows out of the present world of every day.

⁵ From the paraphrase of Psalm No. 90 by I. Watts, 1674-1748.

This direct link between the Process of the Altar and the Process of the Incarnation throws into high relief the necessity of a very clear and unequivocal teaching concerning that which takes place within our chief and central Sacramental Act. We have already seen⁶ how one of the methods used by the world in its resistance to the revolutionary emergence of the Incarnation within it, has, from the beginning, been the method of the intellectual attack. We have said that the great heresies of the Church's history can be interpreted as the world's attempts to reason away the truth of the Incarnation and thus to escape its dangers; whereas the dogmatic definitions of the Catholic Creeds defend the Incarnation from such attacks. A precisely parallel effort can be discerned in certain attempts which have been made, particularly since the time of the Protestant Reformation, to re-express the fact of Our Lord's Presence under those forms of the Bread and Wine which He, as He receives them from the Church, Himself consecrates at every Mass. We may now be able to see that it is necessary to insist upon His initiative in this matter, just as it is always necessary to insist upon His initiative in the Process of His Incarnation as a whole. And the experience of the Church has shown that it is insufficient for this purpose merely to say that Our Lord is present in His Sacrament, while leaving aside all reference to the nature of the Action which that Process achieves.

Our Blessed Lord as God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, is, of course, universally present within His creation. This universal Presence of God did not cease simply because, at a particular time and place, He clothed Himself in the human nature of the Man Jesus. Nor can it be thought of as ceasing when He is acknowledged as present upon any particular Catholic Altar. Therefore, in connection with the Blessed Sacrament, the principal point to be borne in mind is not merely that Our Lord is present, even if, as is sometimes done, we grant to His Presence there a quality which is vaguely termed a "Presence in a Special Sense." This latter expression provides, indeed, only a very ill-defined sort of assertion which, perhaps, no one who believes in God would think it necessary to deny. But for

⁶ Chap. VI.

Catholics, it is necessary to insist upon the particular thing which Our Lord accomplishes as He vouchsafes that Presence. For He is there taking our creation into His transcendent Life, the substance of our bread and wine into the Substance of His Body and His Blood. The movement of the Mass, as of the Incarnation, is, first, from disorder into re-created order on the level of nature, and then, from that contingent and perishable natural order into a Supernatural and Absolute one. The movement of the Mass is from mortality into Immortality, from time into Eternity. It achieves the movement of a re-created manhood into the uncreated Godhead. And it is in this latter fact that the disordered, fallen world senses a radical danger to itself; it is precisely this latter fact which is safeguarded for us by the word *transubstantiation*.

It is interesting to record that at the time of the Protestant Reformation when, as we have also noted, the hostile world succeeded in persuading many Christians that their religion was an exceedingly private thing, devoid of far-reaching social potentialities, this same world also found a theologian to develop a new view of the Blessed Sacrament. This new doctrine was far less dangerous to the world's cherished disorders than was the Doctrine of Transubstantiation. Martin Luther thought of Our Lord's Presence in the Blessed Sacrament in a way which he described as "Consubstantiation."⁷ As a matter of fact it was the heretical implication of this and other Protestant Sacramental doctrines which finally called forth the Council of Trent's definitive promulgation of the Doctrine of Transubstantiation.⁸ For Luther seems to have meant that the substances

⁷ The term "Consubstantiation," according to Dr. Darwell Stone (*Outlines of Christian Dogma*, Longmans, New York, 1919, p. 183) was "invented by the Zwinglians, who denied any presence of Christ in the Sacrament, as a term of reproach against the teaching of Luther." It has, however, been adopted by the Lutheran Church as a justified description of its own official doctrine, founded on the teaching of Luther himself. See the article "Eucharist" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., Vol. IX, p. 874.

⁸ That "Transubstantiation" which is condemned and rejected in the XXVIIIth Article of Religion of the Church of England, is not the carefully guarded and clearly defined doctrine of the Council of Trent. The Article in question was written before the Council's conclusions were made public, and objection is made therein not to the Tridentine Sacramental Theology, but to those vulgar, late medieval interpretations of Transubstantiation, which the definition of the Council of Trent itself both condemns and supersedes.

of the offered bread and wine remain unchanged. In other words, nothing really happens to our world as we lift it up to Our Lord. He does nothing to it in receiving it. He merely comes, in the Substance of His Being, into the matter of the Sacrament and remains there "con," or side by side with the substances of these natural things. Such a doctrine would assert Our Lord's Real Presence, while keeping Him safely separated from His material creation. The implications of such a doctrine should now be so clear as to need no further comment. A belief in "Consubstantiation" gets around a belief in the second part of the Process of the Incarnation. Our offered humanity, instead of being taken into God, is left untouched within its natural world because it is merely brought "side by side" with Our Lord. Once more, Christianity is turned into a religion of some sort of "purely spiritual" relationship, instead of a complete union of men with Him. And such a state of affairs is fairly safe, from the point of view of the world! For under such conditions, while the world's material bread and wine may be conceded to be in danger of some sort of attempted *improvement* by those idealistic Christians who would use them for their Sacrament, they are in no danger of being carried by them into a situation in which, as at every Catholic Altar, they will be relentlessly seized upon by a new Divine Life-Process, snatched out of the world's control, and *revolutionized*—in this connection a permissible variant for *transubstantiated*—into God's own Body and Blood.

Perhaps this Doctrine of Consubstantiation, having long since served its purpose, has a relatively small part in modern Christian thought. However, all other Protestant views of the Sacrament of the Altar play equally into the hands of a disordered world. Because, if Protestants retain any Sacramental belief whatever, they prefer to say that at the Altar Our Lord's Sacramental Presence is Real, and there to let the matter rest. The world, whether it pretends to believe this or not, will raise little objection to it, because under such conditions it can still feel itself unthreatened by any practical, re-creating Action of Our Incarnate Lord. Any doctrine whatever of Our Lord's Presence, left thus without further qualification, while it may admit the

fact that He is *there*, does not necessarily insist that He also *acts*.

There is one special argument sometimes urged against the Catholic use of the word "transubstantiation," which, curiously enough, finds occasional support among people who would like to be considered Catholics. This is the argument that the word somehow involves the acceptance of what is rather oddly called an "outworn philosophy." We may here leave aside the very doubtful suggestion that the philosophy of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas (to which the reference is, of course, intended) may justly be thought of as in any sense "outworn." This is not the place to pursue that question. However, it must here be asserted that the pretended objection thus raised is irrelevant to the present point, because, in the use of the word "transubstantiation," although it is itself borrowed from a Scholastic terminology, there is no good foundation whatever for the notion that it requires the acceptance *in toto* of that system of philosophy. For one thing, the word was fairly common in theological writings some time before the thirteenth century. Furthermore, it was in use during this earlier period when the philosophy of Aristotle, of which St. Thomas later makes such admirable use, was itself either unknown, or else, for a time, actually condemned and outlawed by the Church.⁹ Also, the idea which the word enshrines is still centuries older. The Council of Trent itself, in defining "transubstantiation," refrains from making use of a full Scholastic terminology.¹⁰ In any event, "transubstantiation" makes no pretense of explaining the *mode* or *manner* of what takes place in the Mass.¹¹ Therefore, the question of whether any particular philosophical system is sound or not is quite beside the point. The word does not presume to stand for some kind of theoret-

⁹ Translations of the writings of Aristotle began to appear in Europe toward the end of the twelfth century. In 1215, the Papal Legate in Paris forbade lectures on his philosophy.

¹⁰ The Council refers to a change of "substances," but substitutes for the complementary technical term "accidents," the word "appearances." Sess. XIII, cc. I, 4.

¹¹ The *Catechismus Romanus*, Part II, Art. 226, "De transubstantiatione curiosus non inquirendum," issued with the authority of Pope Pius V, emphasizes this point. It says: "Verum, quid hoc sit, fide cognoscendum est; quo modo fiat, curiosus non inquirendum."

ical analysis, either scientific or philosophical, of the Blessed Sacrament. In this respect it is precisely like the Dogmas of the Catholic Creeds which, as we have already seen, do not explain our faith in terms of philosophy, but safeguard it in the face of attack. Indeed, the word "transubstantiation" is no more tied to a particular philosophy than is the phrase "being of one *substance* with the Father," which occurs in the Nicene Creed. To reject Transubstantiation on such a ground logically requires the rejection of the Creed as well, a thing which no Catholic would dream of doing. We may conclude, therefore, that to speak of Transubstantiation is merely to choose an expression which, by the consent of the Church, does nothing more than safeguard a vital fact for us, and this it does accomplish. It tells us not *how* something takes place, but *what* takes place. It expresses the direction of the movement of the creative Act of Our Lord within the Blessed Sacrament. It tells us that the re-ordered, re-created world is taken into Absolute Order, because it is taken into Him, and that while He in no sense becomes enmeshed within that world, neither does He rest content with merely coming into its proximity. Therefore, if the word "transubstantiation" accomplishes this for us, as it seems to do, in the face of those who would deny the radical implications of the Sacrament of the Altar, then it must be retained. Furthermore, the root origin of the word itself must not be allowed to vitiate or to obscure its present carefully defined and very special meaning, any more than we permit this to happen in the case of other words of technical use. For it can be convincingly maintained, by appeals both to history and to ancient and modern theology, that the doctrine of the Sacramental Real Presence "cannot be stated in such a way as to exclude false doctrine except in the language of Trent . . . and that it therefore involves Transubstantiation."¹²

In today's world we are faced by Dialectical Materialists and

¹² A. H. Rees, *Eucharistic Doctrine and Reunion*, S.P.C.K. Theology Occasional Papers, No. 4, London, 1936, p. 24. Much of the argument of the foregoing paragraph is based upon Fr. Rees's admirable monograph, which should be read. Fr. Rees, a Priest of the Church of England and Minor Canon of St. Paul's, deals clearly and faithfully with this question from the Anglican point of view.

other secularizing Humanists who deny the reality of that supernatural level of being of which we have been speaking. These men and women would therefore deny the real existence of anything which can be described in terms of the Absolute and Eternal. For them, all reality is comprised in what Catholics call the natural, created and fallen world. Present-day Materialists, however, are intensely interested in the re-ordering and re-perfection of the natural world. In addition they seem to feel that much, which Catholics believe they can look for only when the substance of the created world is taken eventually into Our Lord's Risen and Ascended Life, can be accomplished without going beyond the bounds and limitations of the natural material world. "Let us perfect the bread and wine," they seem in effect to say to Catholics. "We know nothing of this lifting up of such things to God, nor of their transubstantiation. Neither do we believe that such an operation corresponds to any reality whatever. Furthermore, if you spend your time in this worse than empty, because mistaken, occupation, you merely distract the attention of the masses of the people from working for the improvement of their material bread and wine, which are the only true realities." They are then apt to add that Catholics thus distract the attention of the masses purposefully, because they are afraid to let them think too much about the evil conditions under which bread and wine are now actually produced.

From an analysis of the present historical position in its both economic and political aspects, Dialectical Materialists claim that a time has arrived such that, if the people of the world but move in the right direction toward a fully Communist economic and political order, a perfecting of bread and wine is a present, practicable possibility. And under the stimulus of enthusiasm for this immediate possibility of realization of a glorious and re-created order of human society here and now, Communists seem to have lost almost all feeling that anything beyond this is needed. While they deny the possibility of anything more beautiful and more worthy of man's highest inborn potentialities than a re-perfected human, social and economic order, they have, at the same time, lost the sense that anything

beyond this may be required by the nature of man. They believe that, once there has been established a Communist economic order and an economically classless society has emerged, there will be at hand, within such a cooperative and economically non-competitive environment, such opportunities for individual and social development that nothing beyond the possibilities inherent in this situation is even imaginable for mankind. Eventually, so it is claimed, under such conditions, avenues for the development of man's highest possible spiritual as well as material potentialities can be opened before us. The intellectual and aesthetic powers of mankind will be then on their way to full stature and complete fruition. The ultimate salvation of humanity will be consummated within our natural world. A perfected humanity—and by this, of course, is meant a humanity which has realized itself to the utmost potentialities of human endowment—is at least conceivable under the conditions of our time and space. And such a "saved"—as Catholics would put it—humanity will probably realize itself within the environment of an economically classless system of ownership and production of the world's material goods.

Catholics are bound to criticize this view of reality as not only inadequate but untrue, in so far as it makes such exorbitant claims for the possibility of the complete realization of human potentialities—in other words, for the Salvation of Man—all within our disordered natural world. Nevertheless they should not be too quick, as they unfortunately often are, to find fault with the millions of economically under-privileged people in the world today to whom such a doctrine seems, not only reasonable, but a glorious challenge to revolutionary action. When Communists insist that the perfection of our bread and wine is of immediate importance, sincere Catholics should be ready to agree with them and should find it possible to cooperate with them in many ways. Even while the Communists deny God, and call themselves strict materialists, such men and women can at the same time be accomplishing something which Catholics, to their shame, have not only neglected but have often sought actually to prevent. When an authoritative spokesman for Communism says that "the coming Communist classless society

should be the most favourable *environment* for the development of a spiritual culture never before dreamed of by prophets, sages or poets,"¹³ thoughtful Catholics should give careful consideration to the validity of this claim. It is precisely an improved natural environment for the growth of the Organism of the Incarnation, an improved soil in the world for the Divine Vine, which Catholics should be seeking with all their hearts. If Communists now make the further claim that the improvement—or even, as they envisage the future, the perfection—of the natural world environment is all that *can* be done and all that *needs* to be done for the salvation of man, Catholics, for their own sins, should receive this claim not with violent denunciations in advance, but rather with patient explanation of their own beliefs. Above all they should receive it with a meek and humble spirit of active cooperation with all practical efforts in the world that give promise of improvement in the quality of the material bread and wine needed by the Church for her own Holy Sacrifice. If, for the time being, some Communists seem to be willing to resort to violence and suppression of liberties in the attainment of what they sincerely believe will be a fuller peace and liberty in the end, let Catholics consider whether the wars and violences to which their own present-day nationalistic Capitalism gives rise are not at least equally open to criticism. Let them also consider whether, in acquiescing in the present *status quo*, they are not closing their own eyes to even worse violences and suppressions inherent in our present economic system, disorders which they may be failing to see because they have become used and hardened to them.

In this latter connection Professor Berdyaev remarks: "It is a mistake, wilful or innocent, to believe that those who defend the *status quo* are not by that very fact using violence and that only those who fight Capitalism are guilty of criminal subversion."¹⁴ In a disordered world, let Catholics beware lest they be found making a hatred of other peoples' violences an excuse for their own unwillingness to endanger certain present com-

¹³ J. F. Hecker, *Religion and Communism*, London, 1937, p. 273. Present author's italics.

¹⁴ *Christianity and the Class War*, p. 79.

forts of their lives, comforts which depend on condoning even worse violences in that Capitalist system which they themselves continue to support. And if Communists, with their present fervor and enthusiasm, seem, in their official philosophy, to confound the operations of model bakeries and of cooperative vineyards with the Process of Transubstantiation, is this not largely because in the past Catholics have persistently neglected those material changes which Communists would now bring about?

Communists now believe that the highest possible human spiritual qualities will grow, springing like a kind of aroma, out of a perfected bread and wine, quite without bringing the latter to a Catholic Altar. This may well be attributed to the fact that Catholics, for their part, have given the impression to the economically oppressed and exploited masses and to millions of men and women needlessly suffering because of the present organization of our material world, that practically *any* bread and *any* wine will suffice for the Altar of the Mass. "God will take care of these things," Catholics have seemed to say. "Our Lord will cover these defects no matter how we neglect them." And so Catholics have been all too willing to come blindly forward with bread which is mouldy because it is made from wheat reaped in Capitalist and Imperialist war zones, and baked in the damp cellars of an economically oppressed humanity. They have dared to come into the Presence of Our Lord asking Him to receive into the Substance of His Blood, the substance of a wine which, as a material taken previously from the world, has been needlessly or even deliberately allowed to be poured bitter and acrid into their offered Cup.

Communists therefore do a true service to the Catholic Church when, in their emphatic insistence upon a radical change in the present economic and social organization of the world environment, they bring home the fact that Christians have long been complacently offering unacceptable gifts at their Altars. It would seem that Catholics have to learn anew, possibly under a stern and bitter discipline, that truth with a statement of which we began this present chapter. Since they will not understand this truth for themselves, they may have to have

it forcefully driven home to them; namely, *the Miracle of the Mass is no magic rite which Our Lord will perform in the face of apathy and negligence, and in the face of unwillingness to suffer in necessary conflict with a disordered world.* Catholics must be confronted with this fact which they have forgotten, that the prerequisite of the Sacrifice of the Altar is a bread and wine of the finest quality which they may be justly expected to procure.

On the other hand, even a long and culpable negligence on the part of Catholics, of the material and temporal aspects of their sacrificial offerings, does not vitiate the truth of the Christian contention that a perfected material bread and wine can never suffice for the salvation of mankind. In any conceivable perfected order so long as it is retained within a fallen world there still remain those three fatal insufficiencies: finiteness, contingency, and mortality. Therefore Catholics, seeing anew the necessity for profound and radical changes in the world environment, must continue to bear unfaltering witness to a further necessity; and they must do this by a faithful attendance at the Altars of the Holy Sacrifice, and by common lives of brotherhood and prayer within the fellowship of the Incarnation. A perfected natural world is not enough.

It is interesting to observe that Communists, even in the midst of their enthusiastic and all-engrossing battle for a revolutionary improvement of the world, are not quite untroubled by the shadows of certain doubts in connection with these further truths with which Catholics are concerned. We have said that in all worldly order we find, first, the ever present danger of relapse into chaos; second, we find contingency in all such created perfection; third, all created order and perfected accomplishment within the world comes to an inevitable end. Signs are not lacking that Communists, whether they openly acknowledge the fact or not, sense the presence of these three profound difficulties in all created order so long as it remains only upon a natural level.

The first difficulty, this danger of relapse into chaos, has given rise to the existence of a large and formidable school of thought which boasts of numerous followers among exponents of Marx-

ian theory and practice. It is claimed by such Communists that it is impossible to build a true socialism in a single country. It is claimed that any newly created economic and political order, if it has only a local existence, will most certainly be engulfed by an enveloping and hostile Capitalism. That is, the newly forming order will be destroyed by its surrounding relative chaos. And if this chaos does not actually succeed in exterminating the new and growing nucleus of developing Socialist order, it will so beat upon its frontiers that the new order itself will have to relinquish its own specifically distinctive pattern if it is to survive the external attack. In either event, the new order will have succumbed to the relative chaos of its environment. Hence the aim of a Socialist order must either be an immediate world revolution or else no revolution at all. The entire Capitalist chaos of the whole world must be re-ordered at one time, and all danger of submergence of the new order in a resurgent environmental chaos must be eliminated by the expedient of eliminating the environment itself. The environment, as it were, must be taken at one gulp into the Socialist or Communist order.

Probably time alone will show conclusively whether the protagonists of this theory, which found its chief exponent in the late Leon Trotsky, are partly right or not. Very likely no Communist follower of Lenin or Stalin, who certainly would take the opposite view, namely that it *is* possible to build a Socialist order in a single country, would disagree with Trotsky to the extent of maintaining that such an order can remain indefinitely within a Capitalist environment without either engulfing that environment or being itself engulfed. Leninist-Stalinists, however, think that at least for a time it is not only possible but essential to consolidate Socialism in a single country, and then to let this new social organism grow outward, bit by bit, stepwise incorporating the rest of the environmental Capitalist chaos of the world into itself. Trotskyites reply to this by pointing to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in which the latter theory is being tried out, and attempt to prove that there, in the battle with the rest of the world, a true Socialist order has already practically been destroyed from within.

A kind of dictatorial State Capitalism has been set up, and the final establishment of world Communism by this method has been turned into a vain dream. That is to say, the relapse of this new Socialist order into Capitalist chaos is already hopelessly advanced, according to the Trotskyites.

To an unbiassed observer, on the other hand, an examination of the accomplishments to date of the young Union of Soviet Socialist Republics seems to present a picture full of hope and promise. For Catholics, it would seem, these accomplishments actually offer an amazing example of how much can be done by man toward the secular improvement of the ordering of his bread and wine. And this much is true even though both the guidance and the grace of the Holy Spirit whose working Catholics always discern in every good accomplishment, be either disregarded or, indeed, vehemently denied by Soviet citizens themselves. Among the workers of this new, Socialist state there now exist, according to reliable reports, a spirit of fresh corporate enthusiasm and a new sense of co-operative human relationships, replacing the bitter competitions which Capitalist societies know. There is a growing feeling of the dignity and importance of the abilities and potentialities of individual men and women working together in common effort, which contrasts, for example, with that most unChristian American frontier ideal, more accurately, jungle ideal, of "rugged individualism." All these emerging qualities of a new kind of human order should be most welcome to every Catholic who has the spread of the Incarnation at heart. That a perfected Communist order is not yet a fully accomplished fact in Russia, should not be used prematurely by Catholics to prove that Capitalist chaos is already triumphing over this growing new creation in human society. Judicious Catholics should rather hope with all their hearts that, against the fearful difficulties which still confront the Soviet State, the hoped-for order of an economically non-competitive society will emerge completely victorious.

On the other hand, Catholics must insist that not even the achievement of a perfectly re-ordered social environment throughout the whole natural world, not even a universal

Socialism, can eliminate the danger of relapse into chaos and disorder. Within the environmental disorder of the world there persists a complementary chaos deep within the hearts of men. There remains the fact of human sin, and this chaos will forever be present within our fallen creation. For example, individuals like those whom present-day Communists call "traitors and wreckers" will not automatically cease to appear when a classless society is inaugurated upon a world-wide scale. The very real danger of succumbing to that chaos which is called Original Sin cannot be completely eliminated by a mere change in the external organization of human society. In a Socialist society the fight against this kind of chaos on the natural level may very well be made much easier than it has ever been under any other conditions of which we have thus far had experience. And such a prospect should be gladly hailed by all Catholics, if it is a fact that Communists are accomplishing something or much in this regard. But no human order can be completely "saved" while it is permitted to remain solely upon the natural level. It must be taken beyond this, lifted up to God, saved by Our Risen Lord, made secure beyond the possibility of any relapse whatever. Otherwise, the spirit of fear must always stalk abroad in every human society, no matter how reperfected within our creation it may be. The spirit of mutual suspicion, or belief in the omnipresence of "spies," will almost certainly continue. Festering mistrusts and jealousies, even of neighbors and colleagues and friends, are bound to intrude themselves in all human relationships which it is attempted to perfect absolutely as relationships within the material world alone. A willingness to "purge" or kill off those who seem to be social heretics or non-conformists will continue drearily on. It may be conceded, even by Catholics, that during an active, revolutionary period, it might prove temporarily necessary to take stern measures against anti-revolutionists. Such people may be likened to pathogenic bacteria within other living organisms, and under certain critical conditions they may have to be strongly dealt with. But no good society, no perfected society can be thought of as containing such people and actions as these, as permanent and continuing elements in its

own order. Yet this, so Catholics believe, must be the fate of all order left in a fallen creation. And so, every Catholic will bear witness before all the world that all gifts of bread and wine, once perfected in the natural level, must then be placed upon an Altar, and lifted into the supernatural level. If human beings retain such gifts solely for their own use, as Communists would do, men will forever be haunted by the well-grounded fear that their bread and wine must once again decay and become corrupt even while they hold these gifts in their hands. They must instead give them to Our Lord, and then receive them back again from Him as His Sacramental Gifts, before they may presume to use them for themselves.

This is that further fundamental truth which Catholics must continually point out to Dialectical Materialists. The danger of Communism, then, is not so much that it is anti-Catholic or even anti-religious. That it so thinks of itself is probably an accident of history for which Catholics themselves are far from guiltless. Neither does the danger of Communism seem to lie in the fact that it is necessarily moving in the wrong direction in its work of re-ordering the natural world. Certainly, from any genuinely Catholic point of view, the formation of a truly cooperative society does not seem to be a movement in the wrong direction. Secular Communism's danger is rather that it is not at present going far enough, while at the same time it insists that it is going as far as it is possible to go, that its own material goal is the ultimate one for man. Catholics may well regard Communists thankfully, as perfecting a new bread and wine; but at the same time they must deprecate the fact that Communists continue to insist that these gifts have to be kept solely on the natural level. It is for Catholics to arouse themselves to the glaring fact that much perfecting of natural bread and wine needs to be done. Probably, also, it is for them to cooperate with Communists in this task. But in addition, they must humbly and graciously seek to show that Communist bread and wine, while far from being offerings which need to be summarily rejected, are nevertheless not final ends in themselves. They must be brought, for their true and ultimate salvation, further on—into the body of Our Lord's social

humanity, and thence, through the Sacrifice of the Altar, into His Risen Life.

As for the contingent qualities of all order achievable within this world, the same Soviet writer just quoted has these further words to say: "The mystery of the cross, of the innocent sufferer, may never be solved. The new social order cannot be a painless, static fools-paradise; so long as the laws of nature continue to function, there will be inexplicable suffering to contend with. The appearance of human self-consciousness is a glorious bright light in the shadow of the universe. Has it its constant beyond the effervescent manifestations we call life? This will probably always remain a mystery, and hence the object of faith and contemplation."¹⁵

Here is a frank acknowledgment that what must be regarded as cruel disorders from the standpoint of Absolute Order, must persist indefinitely within that perfected human order which Dialectical Materialists envisage as emerging from a classless society. Furthermore, it is here acknowledged also that these defects must persist "so long as the laws of nature continue to function." The necessary presence of innocent suffering must, of course, be regarded also by Catholics as, in a certain sense, a mystery; although, in another sense and in certain cases, it would seem simply to demonstrate the corporate social solidarity of all humanity, since those who may be innocent as individuals nevertheless have often to take upon themselves the painful effects of the wrongdoings of others. From this point of view, guilty well-being is the same sort of mystery as is innocent suffering, although it is remarkable how relatively few people seem to complain about it or confess themselves baffled by its presence in the world. However, Materialists, unlike Catholics, must in the end concede that innocent suffering and the Cross have to be regarded as strange but nevertheless utterly irreducible evils within that new corporately perfected human order which they are trying to regain here upon earth. Making the best of this difficult problem, Materialists would seem forced to admit that, unfortunate as it is, those evil qualities in human experience which result from the functioning of the "laws of nature" are

¹⁵ J. F. Hecker, *op. cit.*

ineradicable deficiencies in any conceivable worldly order. This fact must therefore turn any attainable perfection here on earth or within nature into what should, at its best, be more properly described as a more or less *improved* order, a more or less closer *approach* to perfection, than any which had previously existed. And with such a near-perfection, granting for the sake of argument that human sin and the ever-present danger of wilful reintroduction of disorder can be guarded against, Materialists must content themselves.

Now it may be, of course, that the universe, containing men within it, is precisely like this. In other words, Materialists may conceivably be right. If they are, however, there has evolved paradoxically enough within that same universe a species of rational beings who can not only imagine, but who do actually long for and aspire to an Absolute Perfection, instead of feeling themselves entirely content with that Materialist near-perfection, or contingent perfection which, in the last analysis, is the maximum obtainable order within our disordered world. Therefore, if Materialists are right, rational human beings are in the very nature of things doomed to an indefinite—and, in proportion as they become more highly developed, more sensitive and more intellectually endowed—to an ever increasingly exacerbated frustration. It is this brute fact which Dr. Hecker invites us to make the “object of faith and contemplation.”

Catholics, on the other hand, founding their belief upon the revelation of the human life of Our Blessed Lord, do not believe that innocent suffering and the Cross are simply residual and irreducible evils in what would be an otherwise perfectly ordered life in the world. For them, such pain and suffering are instead, as we have already noted, necessary parts of a true and complete perfection as this is re-created and re-ordered on the natural level, utilizing life-materials as these have to be taken from out of the environment of a fallen world. Upon the Altars of the Church they are found to be those contingent qualities inherent in our bread and wine, as they were the corresponding qualities in Our Lord's human nature, which will actually be transubstantiated into joy and victory. Therefore, Catholics view these things merely as contingent elements in all

re-created natural perfection, instead of as those stubborn stumbling blocks which must forever thwart the complete attainment of every Dialectical Materialist's goal.

In this connection it must be clearly stated that there now exists within our present world a great amount of unnecessary human pain and suffering. Intelligent and fearless Catholics are bound to recognize these as *remediable* evils, which are to be eliminated to as complete an extent as this may be done by the wit and self-sacrificing goodwill of men. Suffering, simply because under certain conditions it can be transubstantiated by Our Blessed Lord, is not to be tolerated when it can be properly remedied on the natural level of creation. Still less is it to be sought for its own sake. To seek suffering as a "good" in itself would be to make the mistake of an utterly false asceticism. Suffering deliberately undergone solely for the supposed reason that it will always be a good element in the matter of the Catholic Sacrifice, will be found an element quite unacceptable to Our Lord. Furthermore, if many professing Catholics now take their ease in the presence of other peoples' sufferings under what are actually eradicable social injustices, excusing their own complacency and inaction on the ground that all who suffer innocently may offer up their anguish and frustration to their actual advantage upon the Altars of the Church, then such complacent Catholics assuredly use this argument to their own approaching destruction in this world and to their highly deserved damnation in the world to come. But that irreducible suffering found in the nature of things, that inexplicable pain with which we must contend "so long as the laws of nature continue to function," and, above all, that suffering which Catholics willingly and cheerfully bring upon themselves in their battles with the disordered world; the wounds and Cross which they embrace rather than leave the disorders of the world unattacked; such suffering is not an intrinsic evil, but one of those contingent perfections which are ever to be found in every re-created order in the natural world. And these perfections will assuredly be transubstantiated into the Substance of an Absolute and Eternal Glory as they are received by Our Lord into His Body and Blood.

With regard to the other characteristic of all achieved perfection within our fallen world, namely its temporal and relatively fleeting character, Dialectical Materialists often have little or nothing to say. In the excitement of newly opened avenues of fresh social accomplishment, they rather tend to pass over what, from a theoretical point of view, is for them the awkward shadow of approaching death and dissolution. "The appearance of human self-consciousness is a gloriously bright light in the shadow of the universe. Has it its constant beyond the effervescent manifestations we call life?" asks Dr. Hecker.¹⁶

Mr. John Strachey, another able advocate of the Communist Revolution, seems to think that this question may become unnecessary for the reason that human self-consciousness may become less and less effervescent.¹⁷ He believes that in the coming classless society of a world-wide Communist community, not only might sickness and physical frailty be eliminated from the human body, but that death itself might conceivably be conquered even within this natural world. Thus men and women may come to lead endless, deathless lives on the face of this earth.

Such a suggestion, as far as our present scientific knowledge goes, is, to say the least, highly imaginative. It can be admitted, as Mr. Strachey claims, that "in a society which was so organized as to give full possibilities to the development of science, a century or so of biological and medical research might enormously extend the average life-span." To date, however, our already accomplished, very measurable extension of man's *average* life-span has been achieved largely through the better preservation of the lives of infants and of relatively young people. This has enabled many who, under earlier conditions, would have died young, to attain a greater age. But the average human life-span has not been raised through the prolongation of the lives of many additional people who have passed the ages of seventy-five

¹⁶ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁷ *The Coming Struggle for Power*, New York, 1933, p. 358. Mr. Strachey's participation (September, 1940) in the present war under British imperialist auspices does not, of course, invalidate his earlier advocacies. It does, however, illustrate one kind of consequence to be expected from precisely these inadequacies of Marxian materialist philosophy which we are here analyzing.

or eighty. More important in this connection is the fact that there is little evidence that the period of maximum vigor and activity in human life can be extended into later years. Even when a human body itself does continue to function or to retain at least a spark of vitality, in rare cases for a hundred years or longer, the possibility of originaive accomplishment, of true creative activity, is left far behind. Therefore to add, as does Mr. Strachey, that there is "no scientific necessity to suppose that in the end death could not be indefinitely postponed," while technically a barely admissible statement, is a conclusion which he should not attempt to base upon any positive scientific knowledge which we at present possess. It is almost pure guess. It is a still greater guess to suppose that living, active vigor can be indefinitely retained within an aging body. And when it is claimed that this would be one of the results of the establishment of a Communist society, the prophecy has a strangely apocalyptic sound.

Furthermore, if Mr. Strachey's argument is intended as a word of reasonable encouragement to those who, to the dampening of present enthusiasms, now tend to look too far ahead in a materialist future, it unfortunately leaves out of consideration the fact that the material universe itself grows old. "The sun shall be darkened," and in the end "the moon shall not give her light."¹⁸ In this context, who cares whether this be in seventy or in seventy milliards of years? Human self-consciousness, that "gloriously bright light," will cease to be within this material universe and, once it has ceased, the massive ordered accomplishments of milliards of years can be equated to the most minute imaginable achievement of an instant of time. Both will then be precisely as if they had never been at all, if they really have no constant beyond the "effervescent manifestations" of the Cosmos itself. For behind the hurlyburly of our feverish present activity the *Chorus Mysticus* once heard by Faust still echoes insistently in our human ears:

"Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichnis"¹⁹

¹⁸ Mark 13:24.

¹⁹ *Faust*, Part II, Act V.

If at that far call we pause for reflection, we, because we are rational human beings, will be all too aware that

“The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a wrack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.”²⁰

Surely we cannot close our ears and our reasonable minds to the fact that these sober lines apply to everything accomplished, everything re-created, everything reperfected within any universe which is known to be separated from an Eternal Reality transcending the oblivion of time. For, in such a universe, oblivion awaits all human building, all human accomplishment, material, intellectual or aesthetic. And, furthermore, it matters nothing in *that* end, whether the cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces be those of a single tyrant, of a tyrannous privileged class, or whether they be those of a classless Workers' Park of Culture and Rest!

Briefly, then, the Catholic Faith teaches us that the Sacrifice of the Mass is the central and most important Act to which Christians, who are still in the material world, are summoned. It has this dignity because it is an ever-recurring unveiling of the Eternal Sacrifice of Our Lord upon His Cross. It is, therefore, the point at which our time passes into His Eternity, and the ordered accomplishments of our contingent lives pass into His Absolute Perfection. Catholics know that that pain which comes unavoidably in nature and in innocent suffering, and the wounds received in their battles with a disordered world, are necessary parts of their truly perfected social and individual lives here on earth. They know that the Religion of the Incarnation is not present with us to play the trivial role of “making good,” or of compensating for these evils which, logically, Dialectical Materialists must simply “grin and bear.” Catholics, brave men and women also, not only could but would be quite ready to “grin and bear” these things as well as Materialists.

²⁰ *The Tempest*, Act IV, Scene 1.

Catholics are not "escapists" as the modern catchphrase goes. But they have the untold advantage of understanding how these difficult things fit into the scheme of the salvation of this world, and how upon the Altar they are received into joy and victory. Catholics have not only watched Our Lord upon the Cross, but they have also seen His Resurrection.

But ineradicable pain and innocent suffering are only special cases among all the contingent elements of life which enter into the bread and wine which Catholics offer on their Altars. For all the best things of the world, the most beautiful, the most joyous, the most happy things; all truth and intellectual achievement, all goodness and lofty moral or humanitarian activity; all beauty and aesthetic accomplishment, all love and human gentleness, when achieved within Our Lord's social humanity here on earth, can never be thought of as final or sufficient, as non-contingent or eternal, things. All these happy fruits possible to a redeemed natural humanity, even when they emerge within the growing order of Our Lord's visible body, the Church within this world, remain equally contingent and mortal until they too have been lifted up sacramentally upon the Catholic Altar. In the Catholic view a perfected natural bread and wine can have but one ultimate meaning and value, namely, that they are capable of entering into the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

On the other hand, no Catholic must ever permit himself to forget that these material things, the bread and the wine, are indispensable for that Sacrifice; and that without them, perfected to the utmost of human capacity within the world of here and now, *the necessary Sacrifice cannot itself be offered up*. There is required the substance of a perfected natural world before this can be transubstantiated into the Substance of the Body and Blood of God. Thus, a re-creation of the world, together with the offering up of it in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, are both essential and necessary activities for Catholics. Both of these things must be done if a fallen and disordered creation is to be redeemed. And it is to this double vocation that they must recall themselves, if Catholic Christians are to be worthy of the Name they bear.

IX

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE way in which Our Lord chiefly liked to refer to that New Order which He was initiating in the midst of the disorder of His fallen creation was as a Kingdom, the Kingdom of God. This expression, which occurs over and over again in the sayings and discourses of Jesus, may perhaps be more accurately rendered in English as the Reign or Sovereignty of God. In any event, the expression calls attention to that new hierarchical order of the re-created social organism which was beginning to form about Our Lord's Person, and which was starting to grow and to spread outward, having as its living center and efficient focus the newly created order of His own individual Self. We have already noticed¹ that Our Lord also likened this fresh impact of the creative power of the Divine Logos upon a disordered creation, to the growth process of a vine, nourishing itself upon the elements of the soil of a garden. But the idea of the Kingdom of God lays an additional emphasis upon the human, social and personal qualities of the elements entering into this new creation. It emphasizes the fact that the materials of that "soil" from which it draws its newly ordered, living content are the multitudinous materials of the social interrelationships between men and women in their daily lives, their actions and attitudes toward one another, as well as those elements, emotional, intellectual and aesthetic, available in the interior and more private portions of their lives. All these materials, all elements of human life, both social and individual, have to be redeemed out of that relative disorder into which they have fallen in the world of nature as it is, into the new order of a social organism harmoniously and functionally united to that living Center which is the Incarnate Son of God.

The expression itself, "The Kingdom of God,"² does not

¹ Pp. 115ff.

² The Gospel according to Matthew uses, as a rule, the expression in the form of "The Kingdom of Heaven."

originate with Our Lord, nor was it unfamiliar to those who heard Him use it. Already, as we have also noted,³ the Hebrew people had long since been led by Prophets and by Psalmists alike to look forward to some kind of eventual Divine intervention in the affairs of the Jewish nation; and much popular sentiment in Our Lord's day would have been ready to respond to a leader who seemed to promise a new earthly kingdom strengthened and made possible of realization by a visible irruption of the miraculous and overruling power of the God of Israel.

Among the Jews there was present as well another and much more otherworldly, or better, *nextworldly* interpretation of the Kingdom of God. This interpretation turned its back upon the immediate hope of a new and powerful, Divinely led material kingdom for Israel in this present world. With regard to any plan for practical action, those who held this second interpretation tended to counsel waiting and inaction. They contented themselves with thinking sometimes of a future kingdom located above in a kind of spiritual heaven, after the destruction or end of this material world; or sometimes they thought of this kingdom as if it were already something prepared and waiting in a transcendent spiritual level of existence, in such wise that at some future day it might be sent or brought down by God, and thus enforced or superimposed upon this unsatisfactory material world of everyday. In such a spiritual kingdom, whether thought of as having its future abode on the face of this earth or not, but to be provided in any case by catastrophic force, the Blessed and Elect of God would be at peace and live in plenty, and God Himself, having destroyed all those elements of this world which now warred against Him, having put all things in subjection under His feet,⁴ should in the end be all in all.⁵

Between these two extremes of belief in what was to be expected in the Kingdom of God, the popular Jewish conception was inclined to sway back and forth. Although they seem to be

³ P. 17.

⁴ Heb. 2:8.

⁵ I Cor. 15:28.

mutually contradictory, a synthesis of the two conceptions was sometimes attempted. From this attempt arose the notion of an earthly Divine kingdom which would last for a thousand years, the "Millenium," and which would then be superseded by a consummated spiritual kingdom, which would last forever; and in this consummated kingdom not only the living, but the dead, after a general resurrection would also have their part.

Probably, most of those who heard Our Lord preach, and even those who came to know Him privately and intimately, at first, looked eagerly to Him for some sort of clarification of their thoughts, and for some authoritative assurance of their hopes concerning these varied and somewhat self-conflicting notions which they had already received out of their national traditions and from their other religious teachers.

It is clear that Our Lord began His teaching ministry by making, at the very outset, a specific and emphatic reference to the Kingdom of God. Our earliest record is that "after John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and saying: 'The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the Gospel.'"⁶ Here, then, was a call calculated to attract the attention of all Jews, whether they were primarily patriots and wanted to drive out the Roman political rule, or whether they were primarily religious people who held chiefly to a purely spiritual interpretation of the Kingdom.

But although Our Lord used this well-known phrase to His own purpose, it soon became apparent that He was putting a great deal of new content into its meaning. That the Kingdom, which He was now initiating and to which He was issuing this peremptory call, was indeed something utterly new, something in some sense even discontinuous with all that had gone before, is shown by His unmistakable exclusion from it of His older friend and precursor, John the Baptist. For in spite of what is clearly Our Lord's almost unbounded admiration of John, of whom He said, "Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater Prophet," He nevertheless added, for the enlightenment of all who heard Him, that "he that is least in the

⁶ Mark 1:14-15.

Kingdom of God is greater than he,"⁷ that is, greater than this greatest of the Prophets. Clearly, St. John the Baptist could not have been excluded from Our Lord's new Kingdom because of personal unworthiness, but only because he lived prior to its advent in time. Evidently, also, there is a hitherto unheard of quality in a Kingdom which has the power so to exalt the very humblest, the least educated, the most under-privileged of its members above even the greatest men of the world who had happened to live before its appearing on this earth.

On the other hand, there are nevertheless sayings of Our Lord which seem definitely to link His new Kingdom, in some of its aspects, with certain older conceptions. He seems, to be sure, from the very beginning to have rejected the current popular conception of an exclusively material Kingdom. This was, indeed, definitely rejected at the time of Our Lord's third temptation in the wilderness, when He refused to take possession of "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them"⁸ in order to implement His own vocation in the world. We are told that once, when a multitude or mob threatened to come and take Him by force and make Him a king, He acted consistently with this rejection and "departed into a mountain Himself alone."⁹

In this respect, then, Our Lord certainly breaks with both popular tradition and popular expectations. However, He does not seem quite so completely to reject the other popular idea that the Kingdom of God must eventually be in some sense consummated in a truly overruling, spiritual perfection. Somewhat according to the apocalyptic expectations of one strand of Jewish Messianic tradition He seems to imply that in the end God will indeed come into His Kingdom with power. Our Lord predicts His own Second Coming, His manifestation in power and great glory after His withdrawal from His present human life. He foretells what is called His *Parousia*. Against a portentous background of catastrophe, cosmic and universal in its scope, "with signs in the sun and in the moon and in the

⁷ Luke 7:28.

⁸ Matt. 4:8.

⁹ John 6:15.

stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, with the powers of heaven shaken, the Son of Man shall be seen coming in a cloud with power and great glory." "When ye see these things come to pass," He told His disciples, "Know ye that the Kingdom of God is at hand."¹⁰ Here is a picture of the consummation of a new social order in the affairs of men imposed by a terrifyingly miraculous Divine Power, accompanied by the forceful, indeed the violent obliteration of every element of disorder which may at that fateful moment still remain in this world, contrary to that Power's own transcendent perfection. Furthermore, this eventual catastrophic coming of God's Reign in the Person of His Son, is announced in terms taken almost verbatim from those ancient Scriptures already familiar to Our Lord's auditors,¹¹ and which would thus seem definitely to have reference to their own traditional Jewish apocalyptic hope.

In order adequately to interpret these apocalyptic sayings of Our Lord Himself, we must presently consider them further in connection with His much more extensive additional teaching concerning that same Kingdom of God. Here, however, we should record that this type of apocalyptic hope, for a future catastrophically bestowed Divine Kingdom among men, as this hope was entertained by many Jews both before and in Our Lord's day quite independently of His own teaching in the matter, tended, in the minds of those who believed this, toward a policy of complete inaction with regard to the improvement of the actual world here and now, and toward the paralysis of any human cooperation or attempt at preparation for the coming of the Kingdom. Since this kind of new human order in the Reign of God was, on this view, in any case to be provided solely by an overruling Divine Act, little remained for men but passive waiting. It was believed that in the meantime individu-

¹⁰ Luke 21:25-31. It may here be emphasized that the best modern critical judgment is that the so-called apocalyptic prophecies of Our Lord, as they are recorded in the Gospels, are among the most authentically reported of His original teachings. Cf. Mark 13:24-27; Matt. 24:29-31.

¹¹ E.g., Joel 3:15-16.

als must keep the Law. Otherwise, eventually, they might not find themselves among those who were to be judged worthy to have a share in the Kingdom. But beyond this individual preparation of each man in his own present life, no one needed to do more than put the best possible face upon the evils of the contemporary worldly environment, and bear them with all possible patience. Such patience was possible to those who believed, because, at the coming of the Kingdom, God's vengeance would destroy the wicked and more than compensate the innocent for their former sorrows and sufferings and pains.

It is almost superfluous to comment that this kind of religious hope can validly be interpreted as a fantastic, wish-fulfilling day-dream. It is a mirage-like compensation for immediate frustration in the environment of the world, projected into an imagined fulfilment in the future. It is the kind of hope which, when untempered and uncorrected by any other conception of the Kingdom, both could and actually did act as an "opium of the people." It seems to us to justify this Marxian materialist criticism of religion. In passing, it is striking to notice how closely the idea of "heaven" held by many modern Christians, seems to correspond to this particular ancient Jewish apocalyptic hope of the Kingdom of God.

The Gospel records, however, make it abundantly clear that Our Lord's new teaching concerning His own Kingdom was by no means confined to an apocalyptic picture of a supernatural irruption of Divine rule, such as would be signalized by His Second Coming. Indeed, the way the matter is reported in the Gospels indicates that this prophetic revelation of what was to be expected at the "end of the world," was explicitly given only on one occasion. And not only this. According to the Authors of the first three Gospels, all of whom record these apocalyptic sayings, the latter were not ever uttered in public but only to the disciples alone, St. Matthew adding "privately,"¹² and St. Mark even narrowing the number of those who first heard them to that little inner circle of the disciples comprising only Peter and James and John and Andrew.¹³

¹² Matt. 24:3.

¹³ Mark 13:3.

It would seem, then, that during His lifetime the apocalyptic aspect of Our Lord's Kingdom was an esoteric truth. It was guarded, perhaps exclusively, for those who had a careful and particular instruction from Him, and who could, therefore, be trusted not to misunderstand or to warp the emphasis of His words. On the other hand, throughout Our Lord's whole ministry, His preaching, under all sorts of conditions, before multitudes of men and women from every class and walk of life, is filled with other references to His Kingdom. Many of Our Lord's most beautiful and poetic analogies or parables are applied to the elucidation of what He meant when He took the familiar expression "The Kingdom of God" upon His lips. Over and over again He begins His discourses by saying: "The Kingdom of Heaven—or the Kingdom of God—is like unto . . ." and there then habitually follows some analogy drawn from nature, or from experiences in the ordinary lives of people living in this world. These parables were always figures of speech or stories concerning things as familiar to the humblest as to the most exalted and cultured among all who heard Him.

Now it is a notable thing that all this open and public teaching of Our Lord about His Kingdom is exclusively concerned with something which is thought of as happening or beginning to happen in the natural world of His own contemporary environment. "The Kingdom of God *is at hand*" He cried at the outset of His ministry. And, as we noted, this was clearly to be a Kingdom in time and not in eternity. Otherwise, it is not possible to explain the saying about John the Precursor. This great man could certainly have been expected to enter into an apocalyptic future Kingdom at the general resurrection of all just men; but according to Our Lord he had died too soon to have any part in this immediate new Kingdom which was only now, for the first time, appearing with the appearance of Our Lord's human life upon the earth. This kind of Kingdom obviously starts at a given point in history, and, far from being heralded with portents in the world of men or inanimate nature, it begins gradually, obscurely, "without observation" as Our Lord Himself said of it,¹⁴ a quiet process emerging while

¹⁴ Luke 17:20.

the present disordered world around it is left, for the moment at least, unaffected and unscathed.

These two aspects of Our Lord's teaching concerning His Kingdom, the apocalyptic teaching and the teaching concerning a slowly and gradually growing new earthly order, have given rise to much controversy, not only among scholars, but between whole groups of Christians who have believed that two such differing pictures of the Kingdom of God could not both be true ones. Nevertheless, they are both in excellent and logical agreement with that understanding which we have here all along been seeking of the Incarnation as a new order appearing in the midst of a disordered creation to re-order that disorder into itself. For this new order, as we have seen, takes its content through a living re-creation of the natural world; and regarded thus, the Kingdom of God describes the Incarnation Process which begins in Our Lord's own lifetime, within His—and our—world of time and space. But we have also seen that any such new order, any such new creation, so long as it remains upon the natural level can at its best attain only to a perfection which is contingent, limited in scope or content, and also perishable. Therefore, before Our Lord's work of Incarnation is finally complete, His new creation within the world, formed from the materials which the world supplies, His New Kingdom, beginning with His own renewed humanity and spreading outward from Him in a new social order, not only needs to be, but *will* be taken into an Absolute, a Universal and an Eternal Perfection. Thus, the new order of the Incarnation growing in the natural world is that Kingdom of God here and now to which Our Lord's public discourses so often refer. The Absolute Order of the Incarnation is that Apocalyptic Kingdom concerning which only a relatively few during His lifetime were instructed. It is His Kingdom on earth taken into heaven. In other words, it would seem that that Kingdom which is to be eventually bestowed by Our Lord at the "end of the world" by His Act of taking a re-created order in the natural level into the Risen and Ascended Order of His Godhead is, as it were, but another way of thinking of what might be called an ultimate transubstantiation of His earthly Kingdom. When that

time comes, a new and re-created natural order which, finally and at last, shall have sufficiently fulfilled itself within our natural world, will be received into the Absolute Order of His transcendent Being. Therefore, His Kingdom in this world is His growing and enlarging humanity. His consummated Kingdom is His Risen and Ascended Life.

In the meantime Catholics, even while still in the world, are not left entirely without access to this final and eternal consummation. For, in the lifting up here on earth of the re-created Kingdom of their natural material bread and wine, they find that all acceptable, partial achievements, all increments of new order in the midst of a fallen natural world, as these are made to take form and grow little by little and step-wise in the long continuing process of history, can be taken, even now, into the Eternal Kingdom of Our Lord's Body and Blood. Thus at every Mass the consummated Kingdom of Heaven is opened even to our fragmentary achievements of new order, which we, bit by bit, as it were, complete within this world. We may bring all our partial, contingent and interim offerings in regular succession to Our Lord's Altar, that they may be made immediately absolute and eternal in His Risen Life. We do this against that more distant time when the Process of the re-creation of all of His natural creation shall be made sufficiently complete, and His Kingdom in this world be received, as a whole, into the glory of His heaven.

But just as the Absolute Order of Our Lord's Risen Perfection waited, in His individual case, upon the preparation of His perfected humanity; and just as the Gift of His Body and His Blood, in the Sacrifice of the Altar, waits upon the presentation of a bread and wine perfected out of a disordered creation, so now, His Eternal Kingdom waits upon the perfection of His Kingdom in this world. Therefore, just as we might expect, Our Lord's teaching concerns itself very largely with the various and necessary aspects of that newly forming order which has to be prepared anew, in our time and space, from the present disarrayed elements of His originally perfect, but now fallen, natural creation.

His new creation in this natural level must take into itself,

if it is to appropriate the whole substance of the world, all created elements, physical, psychological and spiritual, which are to be found in individual human lives. It must also re-order the social relationships of the environment in which those lives are lived. The re-creating impact of the Divine Logos is made both upon individuals, in the order of their interior, personal natures, and also upon the exterior social contexts into which those individuals must of necessity enter. The Kingdom of God must be a new order in corporate human living as well as in human hearts. And it is a fact that Our Lord's parables of His Kingdom here and now, that is, of the Order of the Incarnation spreading in this created world, do concern themselves with the various qualities of these two complementary aspects of His ordering activity.

As God's Holy Spirit comes into the hearts of men, and as they permit His entrance there, He opens such hearts to Our Lord's words and teachings, so that the latter initiate there a new interior order of human dispositions and intentions. Such hearts are like good soil, says Our Lord, in which He, as sower, may sow His seed and can then find His words, under the promptings of the Holy Spirit, taking root and springing up as a new living order appropriated out of that disorder which it now replaces just as grain grows in the earth. In this beautiful Parable of the Sower¹⁵ Our Lord also clearly brings out the fact that His creating power will not be permitted forcefully to overrule the resistance or carelessness of men who prefer their own present disarray. Some hearts, He says, are like unpromising and barren soils; for some are lifeless and hard, and some are shallow, and some are so choked with their particularly cherished interior disorders, misdirected affections and warped emphases, that they are like fields filled with thorns and briars. Nevertheless, those who do let in the power of His new cre-

¹⁵ Matt. 13:1-9; Mark 4:1-9; Luke 8:4-8. It is worthy of remark that this parable, so familiar and so seemingly clear to us, bewildered all who first heard it. Our Lord's contemporaries were, at the moment, expecting to hear something applicable to a new conquering power for driving out the Roman rule. They were neither prepared for, nor interested in, a radically new ordering of the world, either interior or environmental. Cf. Headlam, *The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ*, London, 1927, pp. 253-254.

ation respond with perseverance¹⁶ and, in a continuing joy, they "bring forth fruit," that is, they cooperate with the miracle of re-creation being wrought within them.

Once this process has begun those who experience it rejoice in it, judging it the most glorious thing imaginable. The realization that Our Lord is actually taking their own disordered natures into the order of His Nature and that in this He is opening the way, not only for an ever broadening knowledge of His life, but also for actual incorporation into the order of that life, gives to such people an unexpected and undreamed of joy. They become like some pearl merchant who suddenly comes upon a pearl which he recognizes as worth everything else in the world which he has hitherto accumulated and accounted most valuable.¹⁷ Or they become like someone who unexpectedly stumbles upon a magnificent treasure buried in a field, and immediately sells every other possession to buy that field because, although it may not seem valuable to other eyes, he himself knows that a priceless thing is hidden there.¹⁸

In such parables are emphasized the effects of the Incarnation in individual natures, their renewed enthusiasms, their changed emphases in living; but there are other parables which emphasize the social and organically corporate implications of the Kingdom's character. The Kingdom is like some tiny seed which, in spite of its diminutive size, matures into a plant large enough to shelter the birds when they light among its branches.¹⁹ Or again, it is like a little yeast spreading and permeating a mass of dough, leavening the whole.²⁰ Here we have clear reference to new living organisms growing as corporate entities within the environment of the world, spreading out-

¹⁶ Luke 8:15. Gr. 'εν ὑπομονῇ is inadequately rendered "with patience" in the English Bible.

¹⁷ Matt. 13:45-46.

¹⁸ Matt. 13:44.

¹⁹ Matt. 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18-19. Our Lord's reference is not to what we think of as a "mustard seed" but to the garden annual, *Sinapis Nigra*, whose seed was used proverbially in the ancient world to signify anything exceedingly small. It customarily grows, however, to a height of ten or twelve feet, a much taller plant than many of its garden neighbors which themselves begin with larger seeds. See Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, Art. "Mustard."

²⁰ Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:20-21.

ward and incorporating individually re-created men and women as elements within a larger social entity. The parable of the leaven is especially striking because, just as leaven itself grows and also changes as it does its work, so individuals, we may conclude, whose interior lives are being re-created by the power of the Incarnation, may be expected not only to be multiplied in numbers but to be themselves altered and changed progressively in their individually re-created natures, as such changes may be proper and necessary within the expanding corporate social process of which they are functional parts. For, since individuals are used to extend the new order of the Incarnation as a growing social organism, they too, as individuals, must be kept developing within and conformable to that new and growing external order in which they are now set.

In other words, it seems clear that Our Lord's new creation, that is, His Kingdom, begins in one sense by His initiative and power working amongst the interior elements in the hearts of individual men. But the resulting re-created human individuals must also be provided as well with a newly ordered social environment within which their own new-found and newly forming order may be implemented in exterior activity. When this appropriate and corresponding environment is provided, its own freshly perfected social relationships will in turn react again upon individual natures, thus enabling the Incarnation Process to go still further in that creative activity which it has already begun in separate, interior lives. It is to this external, corporate environmental order that the social parables of the Kingdom refer. Furthermore, as we have already seen, Our Lord, in the immediate social relationships which He formed about Himself, in the circle of His "friends," initiated precisely this additional, essential social work of His Incarnation. And this new corporate creation endowed by the power of the order of Our Lord's life with its own organic, social life-principle corresponding to His Divine intervention in the hearts of its component members, this new Divine social environment appearing in the world, is His Sacramental Catholic Church, intended to be the visible, corporate expression of His order in process of reconstitution within the world of men.

It should by now be quite clear that Catholics believe that human nature can be changed. It is well to emphasize this point in the face of the reactionary, defeatist and, it must be added, unChristian cry so often echoed in our day to the effect that "you can't change human nature." But at the same time Catholics need themselves to be recalled to the fact that they are committed to a particular theory concerning the manner in which such a change, which for them appears as a radical re-creation of human nature, is to be brought about. They believe, it is true, that Our Lord does actually initiate a new order in interior lives. But they also believe that this new order can come to its complete fruition only within a re-created social environment, a newly ordered common life for men and women living corporately together. Both of these beliefs are comprised within the idea of the Kingdom of God; for the necessary new social order is also available through the same Incarnate creative Power which simultaneously acts within individual lives.

In other words, for two thousand years Orthodox Catholicism has been committed to a belief in a process akin to what modern materialist philosophers since Karl Marx would call a dialectical process in the re-creation of human nature, as changing individual order reacts reciprocally with an environment itself in process of being re-ordered. In Catholic terms, this belief is expressed by saying that life within the corporate Church, as the social extension of the Incarnation, is essential to the salvation of individual souls. For, every re-created interior life of an individual must find an exterior environmental outlet for activity both appropriate and adequate to its own new personal order. And all such ensuing environmental activity not only makes additional contributions to the content of that same exterior order but, in turn, strengthens, modifies and perfects the new interior order itself as this continues to emerge into such action.

If, for example, the fire of unselfish self-spending and of devoted self-giving burns anew in some individual human heart, touched by Our Lord's redeeming action upon it, this soul must be provided with a social environment in which these redeemed and freshly emphasized impulses and affections may be put into

practice. When the seeds of the New Creation of the Kingdom of God are sown in the interior lives of individuals, then these newly budding redeemed organisms will immediately seek behavior outlets in the society in which they live and move. If, for example, they now wish to perform brotherly and cooperative acts with their fellow men, they must, in the Christian view, be provided with a social environment in which such acts are in some genuine sense normal and practicable in daily economic and social affairs. As we have seen,²¹ our present secular economic order is so framed that any thorough-going large-scale cooperative behavior—which means non-competitive and non-profit-making behavior—would endanger the stability of the entire social structure. But the Kingdom of God in its social aspect is, potentially, precisely that necessary new corporate environment which the interior Kingdom in men's hearts requires for its practical expression. Both the individual interior Kingdom and the external social Kingdom are provided by Our Lord, as it were, in germ or seed. The seed of the social Kingdom is, first of all, Himself as an individual in the world, then the disciples, and after them the Catholic Church extending in history Our Lord's humanity.

When the interior Kingdom, in the case of any re-created individual whom Our Lord has touched, begins to emerge in fresh practical action within His social Kingdom, the wealth of the new and reperfected relationships within the content of that Kingdom is itself immediately increased and enriched. This means that the same individual in question obtains, by this very fact, the immediate advantage of a still greater opportunity for "redeemed behavior" supplied by, and precisely because of, the fruits of his own prior contributions to the content of the social Kingdom. This means, again, that the interior Kingdom in his case—as well as in the case of his fellows—can now find a still fuller and more adequate behavior outlet; and this process of growth through interchange between the interior and individual parts, and the exterior and social parts of Our Lord's Kingdom, continues to the progressive enrichment of the whole Kingdom of God here on earth.

²¹ P. 75.

Catholic theology and Dialectical Materialist philosophy differ sharply in their views concerning the ultimate source of the initiation of those changes which can and do take place, both in the natures of individuals and in their corresponding social environments. Those who believe in the Incarnation believe that the impulse to a new order in individual interior lives receives both its initial impulse and its nurture from the Holy Spirit sent by Our Lord for this specific purpose. They also hold that the requisite social environment, the exterior Kingdom of God, spreads outward from Our Lord's humanity in such wise that it is informed with a Divine principle of organic, re-creative growth which has its origin not exclusively in mere natural free human association, even of redeemed individuals, but whose source is the Logos of God Incarnate. Catholics would maintain, therefore, that the Kingdom of God in all its aspects has not only a supernatural source for its informing life-principle, but that it has a supernatural goal as well which is, in fact, a final union with that same source.

On the other hand, Catholic theology would maintain that the Kingdom of God, with its supernatural roots, nevertheless grows and re-creates the world by that very kind of mutual "give and take" between interior human lives and external social order, which Marxian materialists are wont to call a dialectical process. Therefore, it would seem that in their theoretical analyses of practical social changes, and of the manner in which individual human natures are themselves changed within such social changes, Catholics and Marxists might find a substantial, if somewhat delimited, ground of mutual understanding. Because, an analysis of the *kind* of processes which the Incarnation implies does not seem to contradict that objective analysis which such materialists, for their part, make of all progressive changes which take place within a still unredeemed world order. In the Catholic view, the Materialist analysis does not appear categorically wrong. It appears instead not to go far enough. The Kingdom of God would not deny, but would rather both complete and fulfil the utmost potentialities of any exclusively material and natural world order, no matter how perfected this might at some future time be made.

This fact of partial agreement between two views of world order which are often represented as being in hopeless opposition need not necessarily surprise us. For, the Order of the Incarnation both fulfils whatever truth is already known, and carries to their highest potentialities whatever ordered processes are already present within the natural created world, and whatever natural perfection can there be re-achieved. Our Lord said that He came "not to destroy but to fulfil."²² The added supernatural Process of the Incarnation supplants neither natural processes nor rational analyses of truth, but is continuous with them. In theological terms, supernatural grace does not destroy nature, but completes it. This being so, Catholics who all too often are most ignorantly given to thinking of "salvation" as the result of a miraculous intervention which makes their individually redeemed lives utterly discontinuous with the processes of their former lives within this world, must be reminded that there is no such complete discontinuity to be expected. Furthermore, a knowledge of the manner in which the natures of all living things change and evolve within the world of nature gives the best possible insight into what may be expected in the processes of the re-creation of human nature within the Kingdom of God. We may, therefore, profitably make a brief enquiry into this subject.

That "nature" which is the possession of any one individual of a given species of living organism, human or other, appears to be a large pattern or array of qualities proper to the whole species in question. However, in any particular example of the species, only a certain number of these qualities may be realized at a particular time, and others of them may remain latent or potential. This truth has, of course, been known for a long time. A more recent discovery is that among the potential qualities in the nature of any given organism of a species, at the moment it first emerges into living existence, there probably exists a much wider range of possibilities for future development than a superficial consideration might lead us to expect. We are so used to seeing the offspring of a certain species resemble both

²² Matt. 5:17.

its immediate parents and its remoter ancestors in all but minor details, that we get into the habit of thinking that the nature of this species is completely manifested in the examples which come to our attention. Since selected examples of the species sometimes seem to show no tendency toward change throughout long succeeding generations, we also get into the habit of saying that the nature of the species itself does not change. Something like this is probably meant when it is claimed that "human nature does not change." It is unfortunately but a short step from this, for many who are apparently not deterred by its fallacy, to conclude that human nature *cannot* change.

However, the conclusion that all the potentialities for development present within the nature of a certain species are necessarily actually realized in the individuals of that species available for observation, even when these succeed one another in apparently unchanging forms for thousands or even millions of years, is not confirmed by more recent scientific knowledge. It would seem, on the contrary, quite probable that some if not all of the individuals, even within what may seem like the most fixed and unchanging organic species, come into the world with a relatively wide range of potentialities for development. Therefore it may be concluded that as these individuals come to maturity they customarily resemble one another so closely, not so much because they are completely devoid of all possibility of variation in their *nature*, but rather because only certain and invariably similarly selected potentialities in that nature are, under the circumstances of the *environment* of their development, permitted to realize themselves in the maturing forms of the organisms. All the other potentialities for development (which might, for all we know, be very large in number) have in the usual cases simply remained dormant, and these are the cases upon which our conclusions about the unchanging natures of species have in general been based. Latent potentialities for a more varied organic development, which may always have been present although not made actual or realized in the general run of known individuals of a given species, have not, as a rule, hitherto been included in what is thought of as the *nature* of that species. However, some of the most in-

teresting as well as some of the most important experimental evidence of our time compels us now to include many—sometimes very many—of such customarily unrealized potentialities, if we would convey an adequate idea of the nature of a living species.

It follows therefore that the nature of every living organism or species of organism may be understood in two different ways. The word may refer to the sum total of observed distinctive qualities of a large number of individual organisms, found so similar that the organisms possessing such qualities are assigned to a group which is called a species. This is a common and also a narrow use of the word "nature." More properly, the word should refer not alone to those qualities which are ordinarily found in a species as it actually exists, but it should include, at least implicitly, all the other concealed potentialities for development which are now known often to be transmitted from generation to generation within that species, but which do not show themselves under the conditions in which the organisms are propagating and maturing. In other words, the nature of any living organism, in its wider sense, should describe not only what the organism *is* under the conditions of observation but also what it *might become* under certain other conditions.

What an organism is found to be depends upon at least two major contributing prior factors. First, every organism at the beginning of its life possesses a great array of potentialities for future development. These it receives by what is called inheritance from its ancestors. But, second, which ones of this relatively large set of initial potentialities are found at the time of observation to have come into actuality, has depended in every case, to a considerable extent, upon the environment in which the previous development of the observed individual has taken place. The classic modern reference for this conclusion is the work of Dr. T. H. Morgan, experimenting with succeeding generations of *Drosophila*, the common fruit fly.²³ In these experi-

²³ *The Mechanism of Mendelian Heredity*, Morgan, Sturtevant, Muller and Bridges. Revised edition. Henry Holt & Co., 1922. pp. 38ff. *The Genetics of Drosophila*, Morgan, Bridges and Sturtevant. Overdruk uit Bibliographia Ge-

ments, it has been convincingly shown that developed organisms—in this case, adult fruit flies of carefully controlled, identical inheritance—show wide variations in development when the environments in which they are hatched and raised are experimentally varied. The details of these experiments need not concern us here. It will suffice to state that it has been found possible²⁴ to alter inherited development potentialities in this species of organism, in such a manner that what would ordinarily be called a new species of fly appears. This new species is distinguished by the possession, among other things, of an extra pair of legs, as well as by certain structural alterations in the segmentation of the abdomen. If this new and artificially produced species of fruit fly is now bred with other normal and unaltered flies, it is found that certain of the offspring of such unions also develop an additional pair of legs. In this second generation, as well as in succeeding generations bred from them, the occurrence of additional legs is transmitted and distributed according to the already well-known empirical laws of heredity within unchanging environments.²⁵ But this mode of distribution of altered inherited characteristics continues according to the usual rules only so long as the flies are left in a moist environment. If they are transferred to an environment of dry air, additional legs may not appear, even in the case of those individuals which are now known to inherit the *potentialities* for growing them, and which, indeed, would grow them in a continuing moist environment.

These and a multitude of other observations show that it is misleading, because insufficient, to speak of “inherited characteristics” without specifying the environmental conditions under which they are found transmitted. Indeed, a leading contemporary geneticist does not hesitate to say “Every creature has many inheritances; which one shall be realized depending on the conditions under which it develops . . . Men and

netica II, 1925. 's-Gravenhage, Martinus Nijhoff. p. 52. Further references may be found in these works.

²⁴ By treatment of parent flies with Roentgen radiation.

²⁵ These laws were first formulated by the Abbé Gregor Mendel (1822-1888). His own experiments were carried out in the garden of a monastery at Brünn, of which he was Abbot.

other organisms *do not inherit their characteristics at all.*"²⁶ He then goes on to say, in effect, that parents give to their offspring a number of development potentialities "which under one set of conditions produce one set of characteristics, under other conditions produce other sets."²⁷

Therefore, in describing the nature of any living organism it is necessary to describe, as far as possible, its inherited potentialities, and then, in describing the organism as it is, to include a description of the environment within which it has matured. A most striking example of this necessity is furnished by a water-dwelling lizard of Mexico, called the Axolotl. This species of lizard has been observed to alter itself spontaneously after being transferred from its original environment to another.²⁸ This animal in its native Mexico has a short, thick body and external gills, and has reproduced itself in this form throughout many ages. It happens that several of these lizards were brought to live in the Zoological Gardens at Paris, under conditions considerably different from those of Mexico. Here their offspring have developed quite differently. The bodies of individuals of recent generations have become long and slender, external gills have been replaced by lungs, and the animals have come out of the water to live on dry land. Here they now breed, lay eggs, and hand on this new inheritance to succeeding generations. The Axolotl has turned into another kind of animal called the Amblystoma. There is here no evidence that the potentialities for development possessed by the original Mexican lizards were in any way altered. In connection with all our other evidence, it is more scientifically logical to suppose that the potentialities for development always transmitted to all individuals of the species lead to the development of one kind of animal in

²⁶ Quoted from *Prometheus*, by Professor H. S. Jennings, of Johns Hopkins University, Kegan Paul, London, 1927, p. 62. Italics not in original. Dr. Jennings' little book gives an admirable and compact exposition of the principles upon which we are here touching. His other and fuller scientific books and articles may profitably be consulted in this same connection.

²⁷ These conclusions are, of course, based upon a much wider and more varied store of scientific experiments and observations than those furnished in the single example of the fruit fly experiments here cited. However, the present enquiry cannot be turned into a treatise on genetics.

²⁸ The example is used by Jennings in his *Prometheus*.

the waters of Mexico, and another kind on the dry land of the Paris zoo.

There are other examples in nature of the response of apparently identical inherited potentialities to diverse environments, leading to the emergence of differing organisms. The female swordtailed fish, for instance, also from Mexico, responds to an environment greatly deficient in males of her species by herself becoming a perfect male swordtail. This case is interesting because it is a response to a changed *social*, rather than a physical environment. Again, there is a South American lizard whose females alter their anatomical structure, either to bring forth their young alive, or to lay eggs, according to whether they are living in high or low altitudes, that is, in cold or warm environments. Or, to return again to the case of man himself, observations made on so-called "identical twins," twins developed from a single ovum and therefore endowed with identical initial development potentialities, show that such twins may mature with widely different characteristics if, from infancy, they are kept separated and thus develop in different physical, intellectual and social environments.²⁹

To cite a further illustration of this principle, it is commonly said of a child of tuberculous parents that he very likely inherits a "tendency to be tuberculous." Now this phrase seems to express that fact in a form which is scientifically correct. If the child in question does actually contract tuberculosis it will not be because he has "inherited" the disease; but it may quite well be that he has inherited a more than usually pronounced potentiality for contracting it. If his environment is well adapted to this potentiality, if the child is born and brought up in the squalor of a slum, with insufficient light and air and meagre

²⁹ In passing, it may be noted that investigators in the field of genetics have varied in their respective emphases on the relative importance of the roles played by inheritance and environment in the development of living forms. At one extreme, Mechanists of an older school of thought might trace practically all developed characteristics to inheritance. On the other hand, psychologists of the Behaviorist school seem inclined to find the source of practically all developed human characteristics in their environments. To a Mechanist, the future development of a human infant might seem almost as inalterable as the face value of a bank note. To a Behaviorist, it is a kind of blank cheque. Neither of these extremes gives an adequate view of human nature.

nourishment, one might predict with almost complete assurance that this child will also contract the disease. On the other hand, it not infrequently happens that such a child, having a similarly disadvantageous inheritance, is taken at an early age into the open country and there, with plenty of sunlight and plenty of good food, he grows, instead, into a strong and healthy adult. His original tendency, his inherited potentiality for becoming tuberculous, can scarcely be said to have been destroyed by removal from a slum to the country. But it so happens that this same child had also, from the beginning, another inherited potentiality, namely, that of developing a strong, sound body. The changed environment has suppressed the potentiality to disease, and has brought the other to actuality.

Recently, as the result of extensive and carefully controlled investigations carried out at the Iowa Child Welfare Station of the State University of Iowa, it would appear to have been demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that the varied environments within which certain observed groups of children have grown and matured from early childhood to later youth, have made the most profound differences in their developed mentalities. Dr. Beth L. Wellman, who has conducted these investigations and presented the results,³⁰ concludes that if we start with children who, so far as their actual future intelligences and intellectual capacities are concerned, are endowed with equal initial potentialities, a good or a bad environment may make a difference such that in later life a good environment may produce a group of highly gifted children, while a badly deficient environment may produce a group of children whose intelligences are on the border line of feeble-mindedness. The estimates of intelligence have been based in these experiments on standard modern psychological tests for the comparison of mental abilities in different individuals. The important thing for us to note is that a mature genius or an adult idiot may develop from practically identical initial human materials. The factors that condition such wide divergences may be on the one hand a stimulating, or on the other hand a deadening, intellectual

³⁰ *Our Changing Concept of Intelligence*, Journal of Consulting Psychology, Vol. II, No. 4, pp. 97-107, July-August, 1938.

environment. We are thus provided with clear and convincing evidence that just as the "natures" of certain individuals contain potentialities for either developing tuberculosis or for *not* developing it, so likewise, the natures of the children of Dr. Wellman's observations contained original potentialities for developing either brilliant or feeble mentalities. Here again, which of these potentialities have become actualities has depended in a large measure upon the environments in which development has taken place.

It would seem that exactly the same principles of interaction, between inherited potentialities for development and environmental circumstances which condition development, apply to the whole life of every man and woman. The same principles give a major clue to the correct interpretation of the content of any particular human nature as this nature is exhibited in observed cases. Professor Jennings suggests³¹ that in the case of human beings, as distinguished from other living organisms, the number of diverse sets of development potentialities which every child receives by inheritance is enormously great. He adds, "it is, of course, not unlimited. But what the limitations are . . . can be discerned only by concrete studies of man himself."

There is an enormously important additional factor which distinguishes human beings from all other living organisms. This is the fact that they have the capacity of radically altering their own environments as they live within them. Human beings as we have noted already possess an ordering capacity, a creative endowment of their own, because as rational creatures they are, within certain limits, free. As we have put it already in Catholic terms, men are created in the image of God. Therefore, through human action upon it, the order of the world environment is changed progressively. The rational mind of man imposes continually new patterns of order upon both his material and social environments, patterns which correspond to his changing and increasing knowledge and understanding of material and social processes. All other living organisms tend to come to relative equilibria with their environments. This is

³¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 63.

true even when, as in the case of certain social insects like ants or bees, the equilibrium between organisms and environment is one in which very complicated life-processes, social and individual, are involved. Living forms other than man thus tend to remain unchanged in their "natures" throughout ages of time until their environments begin to change spontaneously from causes other than the presence and activities of the organisms in question within those environments. Such causes might be, for example, geological or meteorological. If changes of this kind come about, living organisms are often found changing or, to employ the customary word, evolving in a corresponding manner. But man's rational mind enables him to extricate himself from any such age-long equilibrium with his environment.³² He can and does alter his external world so radically and so extensively, especially in the present age of vastly developing scientific technical control over material processes, that his environment, his world, becomes a quite different place to live in as one generation succeeds another.

But, although man as an ordering or creative agent in his own rational right differs from all other creatures in that he can thus change progressively and continuously the ordered pattern of his environment, nevertheless, he himself, like all other creatures, is always much affected *by* that environment. This fact we have just emphasized in the foregoing discussion. The inherited development potentialities of the human species, the possibilities proper to human nature, are vast in number and still very largely, perhaps, unknown because very largely unrealized; but fresh elements among these potentialities are continually coming to light as man's environment changes, and is changed by him. A point to notice particularly, therefore, is that the changes which man himself in one generation effects in the order of his material and social environment, provide another and further re-ordered and enriched environment for the following generation. The following generation finds itself within a changed exterior world which, in turn, calls forth

³² He does not always so extricate himself. Prehistoric men, like certain savages in the African jungle and the Australian bushmen today, something in the manner of ants led an almost unchanging life throughout long ages of time.

other inherited development potentialities which were not brought to actuality in the parent generation.

Thus does human "nature," using the word in its narrow and descriptive sense, tend to change with the passage of time. The human "nature" of today, if we mean by this expression only to include those potentialities which are actually found developed in the average men and women of our time, is a very different thing from the corresponding human "nature" of, let us say, the eleventh century of our era. Development *potentialities* of human nature were the same, we may believe, in that long past century as they are today; but the actualizations of these potentialities observable in the individuals living at these different periods are certainly very diverse things. And this diversity in the actualizations of the inherited potentialities of human nature, man himself makes not only possible, but partly, at least, inevitable, by those changes which he himself introduces into any given environment by his own activity within it.

How startlingly much can be accomplished in the changing of the "nature" of his children by man himself—that is, how much he can do by intelligent planning to develop into actuality certain desired potentialities of general human nature and to suppress others which are not so desired—by deliberately setting about the re-ordering of his children's environment with this in view, is being demonstrated for us at the moment in both the Fascist and Communist States. This had already been demonstrated for us here in America, had we but had eyes to see it. For example, a free, land-owning, American frontier farmer is possessed of a very different particular "nature" from that of a Russian serf under the Czars, or indeed from that of a Mexican peon in our own hemisphere. All inherited emotional, physiological and intellectual potentialities, the common universal possession of general human nature, have in the particular case of the farmer been brought to maturity within an utterly different environment from that either of old Russia or of Mexico. Contrasting the "personalities" (the adult "natures") of the frontiersman and the serf, their respective potentialities can thus be analysed as not only different in their

relative *degrees* of development, but also arranged in an interior order of an utterly different *kind* of personality.³³

It is to such facts as these that Catholics must be recalled. For the Catholic view of man and of human nature in general is very far from denying that environment plays a large part in the actual development and actualization of that nature in all particular cases. Furthermore, it must be emphasized by Catholics that they are called upon to employ their own natural intellectual capacities and their wills to the utmost, regardless of the present individual cost either in suffering or deprivation to themselves, in order that they may reperfect their worldly environments in ways calculated to elicit those elements of human nature which are latent in their own highest potentialities and which correspond most closely to the will of God for the developed nature of man. Catholics must welcome all those recent additions to our knowledge with which the sciences of genetics and psychology have supplied us. Furthermore, they must give this knowledge all possible practical application, since they cannot for a moment, any more than other intelligent people, believe—to take our former example—that a slum inhabited by underpaid or unemployed workers is an environment which can elicit human potentialities for sound bodies, sound minds or saintly characters.

Here again it seems clear enough that Catholics and Dialectical Materialists should find a common ground both for mutual understanding and for practical cooperative action. But the Catholic Faith parts company with, or better, goes beyond materialists when the latter maintain that human nature contains no potentialities which cannot be realized within an environ-

³³ Kipling's observation that "The Colonel's Lady and Judy O'Grady are sisters under the skin," is a bit of complacent sentimentality. They are sisters, to be sure, scientifically speaking, if we penetrate sufficiently deeply under the skin to those general potentialities of human nature proper to the whole species of mankind. The Colonel's Lady and Judy O'Grady, in other words, might indeed have been sisters when they were infants. But the sum total of potentialities selected by their respective social environments for actual development in their different particular natures may be very divergent indeed. Therefore, in practice to equate the actual natures of these two women, in Kipling's easy manner, by brushing aside all divergencies in their developments, divergencies which in late life can never be completely overcome, is exceedingly and, perhaps, intentionally misleading.

ment which is itself wholly achievable by man alone working solely with the materials of this disordered universe. The Catholic view of man discerns other latent and supernatural potentialities within human nature. These are present in that nature by inheritance, just as are all its other elements; but for their complete actualization they require an environment far more rich and perfect than any which man alone can develop, if left to the power of his unaided natural resources within his fallen world. Through untold ages these latter potentialities have been struggling to come into actuality in the natures of developed men and women, but they are such that they can be called to a full fruition only within a fully perfected environmental order which will in truth reflect the will of God for man and for His whole creation. And beyond even this, they are potentialities such that if they be once made actual upon the level of natural order, as was the case in the perfected humanity of Our Lord Himself, they can then be received by Him into His Eternal Kingdom and into complete union with His Risen Life.

Therefore Catholics believe that without the impact of the Incarnation, crowning and perfecting man's own greatest achievements in the re-ordering of his natural world, man alone can never achieve a re-ordered social environment adequate to his highest human potentialities; and, although the latter are in fact his most truly human ones, they are forever doomed to a lamentably inadequate development, if they are left within what is for them that deficient environmental order which is all that unaided man can achieve out of his fallen world.

So much for man's need of the Incarnation working within his social environment. But the Catholic Faith also maintains that the state of man's nature, in its present development, is such that something more than a perfected external environment is necessary to restore men and women to that perfection of the created image of God which is theirs by right. The highest potentialities of human nature, through age-long misuse and misdirection within a fallen creation, are now so weakened and obscured that, in addition to a changed external

environment—even one perfectly adapted to elicit them anew—they also require some adequate fresh impulse, some renewed parallel impetus within interior lives of individuals if they are to emerge. This too is quite beyond anything which man in the midst of his disorder, even at his individual best, can now summon up.

It is to precisely these two requirements for the salvation of man within our natural world that God has responded in the Incarnation of His Son. First, He summons up anew the obscured latent supernatural potentialities existing within the depths of human nature; and second, He makes possible the achievement of an adequate social environment for the full actualization of these potentialities once they are summoned up. As man gives himself with mind and will to the spreading Process of the Incarnation, we may indeed hope to see the recreated and reperfected order begun in Our Lord's own life once more emerge in the individual and social lives of men.

These two latter aspects of the Incarnate Life-Process may be thought of as the Kingdom of God discernible within this world. They are not, however, the completed and consummated Kingdom. The Incarnation spreading within the disorder of creation is, as it were, the Kingdom of God in the making. This must one day find its adequate social expression in the visible Sacramental Church. It is the spreading substance of Our Lord's humanity. It is the essential preliminary within the natural world for the consummation of the Kingdom, just as the preparation of a perfected natural bread and wine are necessary for the celebration of every Mass. But, when the substance of Our Lord's humanity shall be sufficiently enriched within the world of His creation; when men and women have sufficiently given themselves to Him that He may clothe Himself with their flesh and blood as He has already clothed Himself with His individual human body; when, by His grace, we have given Him the bread and wine of the whole world sufficiently perfected for His final use; then, so we believe, the Last Mass of Creation will be celebrated. Our Risen and Ascended Lord, our Great High Priest, will indeed appear with power and great glory. The substance of His perfected

Kingdom within creation, consecrated and lifted up by Him in ultimate Sacrifice, will be transubstantiated and received as a whole into the Substance of His consummated Kingdom, made Absolute and Eternal in the very Presence of Almighty God.

X

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

IT SHOULD be clear by now that the Kingdom of God can never be viewed as a Divine gift bestowed in such wise that men's own cooperative work in its behalf is not required. On the contrary, the Kingdom most emphatically requires the responsive cooperation of man's natural creative powers, powers which even in the fallen world have never been completely lost. They have been partly obscured. They also find themselves confronted with a re-creative task to which they would be inadequate even if they were not so obscured, because they were originally bestowed only for the task of *maintaining* a created perfection and not for restoring it once this has been marred and thrown into confusion. However, they are not irrelevant to the task of building the Kingdom of God, but rather, as a condition for that building, they must be brought completely into play. Our Lord crowns man's efforts with a perfection not otherwise attainable, but He does not supplant them. He provides a supernatural completion for man's utmost accomplishment. He opens a way which could not otherwise be found.¹ But He does not walk that way carrying man completely inactive upon His shoulders. Rather, just as He will not arbitrarily overrule the will of man, neither will He substitute Himself for man either in interior lives or in social relationships for that which may justly be expected from the activity of man's free and rationally cooperating mind and will. Even the consummated and eternal Kingdom at the end of time, clearly a thing beyond human achievement, obviously a free gift of Our Lord through His triumph in His own Resurrection and Ascension, will not be bestowed apart from man's cooperation. For the eternal Kingdom itself would seem to wait upon the spread of the Incarnate Order within the natural world. It waits until the earthly Kingdom may at some future

¹ Our Lord said of Himself: "I am the way." John 14:6.

time supply an adequate substance for an ultimate transubstantiation into the Substance of the Divine Life. It may well be that this latter fact is the reason why Our Lord, as a man within this world, admitted His own uncertainty as to the time of the consummation of His Kingdom. Only the Mind of God the Father, transcending the time process, can know that period of time which, because of the reluctance of men to respond to the Divine invitation, will be required before the Kingdom in this world be prepared for its final consummation.²

As far as man is concerned, then, the Kingdom of God has always been a potentiality, rather than a completed or ready-made actuality. Its consummation, either as a whole at the end of the world, or in part as at every Sacramental Sacrifice, waits upon an adequate achievement within our natural world. This latter achievement is itself made possible by the grace of God in Our Lord's Incarnation, but it also waits, in turn, upon man's response to a Divinely bestowed opportunity, upon his will to enter the door which has been unlocked for him, upon his willingness to do his painful necessary part. The door will not be opened unless man first knocks; he will find nothing unless he really does seek; nor will he receive unless he first shall ask.³ Furthermore, this kind of knocking, this kind of seeking, this kind of asking, far from being perfunctory preliminary formalities, require, progressively and increasingly, the strenuous use of all man's natural creative ordering powers even to the point of complete exhaustion.⁴

Nevertheless, if we have now guarded sufficiently against the serious misinterpretation that the Incarnation Process can vicariously supplant the efforts of man, then we may safely assert that the Kingdom of God, both as a new order forming in this created world and as an Absolute Order perfected in eternity,

² Mark 13:31-32. Our Lord is reported as saying: "Heaven and earth shall pass away. . . . But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

³ Matt. 7:7; Luke 11:9.

⁴ Cf. The Parables of the Importunate Friend (Luke 11:5-8) and of the Unjust Judge and the Widow (Luke 18:2-6). These parables seem to teach the necessity of the most persevering human action as a condition of God's response in completing and crowning such action with the further supernatural gift of the otherwise unattainable order of His Kingdom.

is, in the last analysis, bestowed by Our Lord through His Incarnation. It is not attainable in its *completion* by man himself. The Kingdom's vital principle of re-creating organic growth is infused into it from God the Creator, who is Himself the principle of all order. The content of its new Order is, to be sure, taken from those offerings which, by God's grace, men and women are enabled to prepare in a relative perfection from out the world's disorder and to bring forward for Our Lord's use in His social humanity. However, in that new social Organism of the Incarnation which feeds upon those offerings, the informing vitality by which they are taken into the Divine and living Vine of Our Lord's Being is a creative ordering principle supplied by Our Lord alone. Therefore, the potentiality of a complete attainment of that ordered perfection which corresponds to the will of God for man, is Our Lord's gift in His Kingdom, and not the achievement of man.

As we have seen, Our Lord's individual and personal action in the bestowal upon other individuals of the vital creative principle of His Incarnate Life was implemented, in His own practice, by the simple summons "Follow Me." The social body of His extending humanity is empowered to take the same kind of action, and to bestow the same vital principle of order upon those who are entering the Church. However, in the case of the Church, that action is implemented in the Sacrament of Baptism bestowed upon her by her Lord for that specific purpose. Thus Baptism, whenever it is given in proper form and with true and correct intention, takes all those who receive it into the life-principle of the new Order of the Incarnation, into a Divinely imparted potentiality for a re-created perfection.

The material form for the Christian Sacrament of Baptism is drawn from an already existing rite of symbolic washing with water, which is of both ancient and nearly universal use. Its natural symbolism is also sufficiently obvious. Man's apprehension of a sad disorder present within this created world is, as has been pointed out, not a recent one. And a sense of being enmeshed in that disorder, in other words, a sense of sin, can readily be thought of in terms of an actual physical contamination with a clinging material filth. It is therefore no cause for

surprise that a ceremony of symbolic washing, usually with water, but in some cases with the blood of a sacrificial animal, as a means of a fresh and purified beginning for a renewed and better life, can be traced in human history until it is lost in misty antiquity. Indeed, the genealogy of this rite, in at least one of its branches, may go back to what was originally the offering of a human sacrifice effected by the drowning of the victim. Thus, by the washing to death, as it were, of a representative man, the evils and sins inhering in a whole clan or group might be cleansed in the sight of a tribal god.

Not unallied to this symbolism of the washing away of sin, the notion of rebirth has also existed from ancient times, and has been connected with ceremonies of washing and cleansing. Such a symbolic connection may have arisen from the observation that the sun seems to be reborn every day from the waters of the ocean. In ancient Egypt, the image of the sun-god was bathed each morning by his priests. "As he was supposed to be born anew each day and stress was laid upon his plunging into the ocean each night, it seems as if the bathing represented a dying and a rising again."⁵

Whether a doing away with sin and a removal of the contaminations of the world's disorders be thought of under the figure of cleansing, or whether such a process be set forth in terms of an actual death to an old way of life and a rebirth to a new one, a religious rite of washing has been employed almost universally by mankind.

Following the logic of the Incarnation—which means using the materials ready to hand in the created world for a further Divine purpose, fulfilling rather than destroying man's rational, if only partial, discernment of truth—this ancient rite of symbolic washing, of purification and of rebirth, is elevated by Our Lord into the Sacrament of initiation, or better, of organic incorporation into the emerging order of His life as He now clothes Himself with His creation. The truth for which the ancient rite stands, the reality of our disorder and the need for its correction, is not denied. The rite itself is therefore re-

⁵ W. K. Lowther Clarke in *Liturgy and Worship*, London, S.P.C.K., 1932, p. 413.

tained, but it is given an added positive content. It now becomes an effectual symbol, a ceremony in which, when performed according to Our Lord's express command,⁶ a person born into our disordered world is given, as the Prayer Book phrases it, "that which by nature he cannot have." That is, he is incorporated into the Order of the Incarnation, grafted into a new Life-Process, and in potentiality, therefore, is "given the Kingdom of Heaven" as he is "received into the congregation of Christ's flock."⁷ He is received into "Christ's holy Church," which is, in its visible Sacramental society, we have now seen, that root portion of the Kingdom of God which is *in process of growing* within the disordered world environment of creation.⁸

To receive the Sacrament of Baptism is therefore, in a literal sense, to be born again. It effects an actual rebirth. All merely figurative or analogical interpretations of the Sacrament are hopelessly inadequate. For Baptism with water, that ancient ceremony now performed in the Name of the Blessed Trinity, has been chosen from out the materials of the world by God Himself. It has then been returned to His Catholic Church by her Incarnate Lord, as the gate of entrance into that very Incarnation which He therewith bestows upon individual men. To receive this Sacrament is to enter the gate of the Holy City which crowns and fulfils man's own utmost rebuilding. It is to begin a new life within the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven.⁹ It is to emerge within what is potentially a completely new environment, an environment whose maturing functional wholeness, whose spreading organic sanity, has the assured promise of being informed with the Incarnate

⁶ Matt. 28:19. Our Lord's words to His disciples as here recorded are: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Although the baptismal formula here given may be of a later liturgical expression, there can be no doubt of the Dominical institution of the Sacrament of Baptism as an appointed means of entrance into the social body of the Incarnate Life. Our Lord says elsewhere: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." (John 3:5)

⁷ Cf. Our Lord's words to His disciples: "Fear not, little flock." The "flock" is here the first or initial corporate seed of the Church, and is thus another name for the forming Kingdom of God.

⁸ The quoted phrases are from the Prayer Book form for the Ministration of Holy Baptism.

⁹ Rev. 21:2.

Life of God. We have already seen that this is an environment which both can, and, as a primary and prior condition of its full realization, must be made to encompass every perfection achievable by man upon the level of our natural world. But it possesses also, as its crowning gift, its own peculiar supernatural perfection otherwise unattainable by man. Fulfilling natural order rather than supplanting it, it provides a supernaturally ordered environment capable of drawing forth to full fruition not only man's highest natural potentialities, but his potentialities for entering upon a supernatural life as well.

In Baptism, then, the baptised individual is moved from the relatively chaotic natural environment of the fallen world, and taken into what is the potentially perfect and supernatural environment of the Kingdom of God. It is, in this respect, analogous to the removal of a weakling child from a city slum into the health-giving surroundings of the countryside; or again, to his removal from the deadening intellectual environment of a badly managed institutional life to the stimulating one of some cultured private family, as in the case of those recent experiments of Dr. Wellman, to which reference has here been made.¹⁰ For, a man born into a fallen world of disorganized human motives and activities, relative to his own potential complete perfection, is in a position analogous to that of a child born into a slum, relative to its potential health. It may be replied that it seems extreme to compare the quality of the entire world environment, including its best aspects, to the squalor and disorder of a modern slum. However, outside the perfection of the Incarnation, outside the new order achievable within the Kingdom of God, no environment whatever is attainable which is adequate to human nature's potential supernatural perfection. Within the environment of the world not only will his highest capacities fail to be called into actuality, but man, who has as an element of his nature also the potentiality for developing into a disordered and evil pattern of being, will not only fail to attain his highest supernatural order of development, but may also fail to attain his proper natural order of development as well.

¹⁰ P. 265, footnote.

It must here be emphasized that the potentiality for perfection bestowed in Baptism still remains contingent upon man's own willing perseverance within the Kingdom. Baptism is no magic rite, any more than the exodus of our hypothetical child from a slum to the countryside involves magic. Such a child, even in the country, may so neglect his health and waste the opportunities of his new environment that his growing mind may yet be warped and his body, in spite of every available advantage, may yet be diseased. He might even choose or create a bad individual environment, by singling out certain evil elements which even his new and preponderantly good environment is bound to supply. He might, for example, reject all milk and eggs in his diet and surreptitiously load his stomach with sweets and an excess of coffee. He might persist in getting his feet wet or in exposing himself to inclement weather. If he were to act consistently in this way he would succeed, by his lack of cooperation, in turning his potentially good environment into a bad one; and we might expect him to develop tuberculosis precisely as if he had continued living in the slum of his birth.

It is clear, then, that when we say in general terms that a human being can be taken from the "bad" environment of a slum into the "good" environment of the country, we mean, more exactly, that these environments are constituted respectively of preponderantly bad or preponderantly good elements. No environment in the world is completely bad or completely good. An exceptional person, without moving physically from a bad environment, may select for his use a sufficient number of good elements from a preponderance of bad ones to create a relatively good individual environment in the midst of the generally adverse one. In the case of a slum, the environment may well be so preponderantly bad that the selection of a sufficient number of good elements from it would prove a sheer impossibility for even the most cooperative child, cared for by the most intelligent parents. Under such conditions, if a child had that tendency to tuberculosis which we have hypothesized, it would be essential to remove him from his slum if he were to have even a possibility of escaping eventual disease. The point

to be borne in mind in such a case is that the very best environment has to be used properly; and, although a selection of favorable elements may be very much easier within it than within some other, nevertheless this kind of selection has continually to be made; and a rejection of certain adverse environmental elements, which are always present along with the good, must also be intelligently continued.

In addition, as we have now seen, the number of favorable elements even in an initially good environment can be increased by contributions from men living within it; and this, in turn, to their own mutual advantage. In the case of the environment of the country, the good elements already present may be increased by, for example, improved drainage of land, improved breeding and care of milch cows, or by new buildings admitting a maximum of fresh air and sunlight. For these reasons, when a slum child is taken into the country his new environment, although immediately better than the old one, is not necessarily all ready-made at its potential best. The new environment may be immediately sufficient to start the child on the road to health. But as he grows and matures he has it in his own power further to improve that environment, to contribute more and more good elements to it. Then, with his environment thus improving through his own contributing efforts, he may subsequently grow still more robust and more alert in mind, developing his potentialities much further than would have been possible if he had left his initial country environment, good as it was compared with the slum, untouched and exactly as he found it.

The supernatural environment of the Kingdom of God, growing within this world, which is "given"¹¹ in the Sacrament of Baptism is of the same kind which we have been considering in the foregoing analogy. Its peculiar property is that it does contain from the outset elements bestowed by Our Lord in His Incarnation, essential to the supernatural development of human beings. They are elements which cannot be found in any environment whatever in the world outside. It is this environment which the visible Catholic Church, although corrupted

¹¹ Prayer Book, *loc. cit.*

by much uncorrected worldly disorder and recreant to her high calling, does nevertheless supply. She supplies the indispensable elements for the development of a supernaturally ordered human life. These elements are her corporate life of Sacraments and common prayer, and her Divinely informed social fellowship. Sometimes these elements may seem to be present in a minimal actuality and in barest framework, awaiting a more substantial content. They are nevertheless there. Therefore, within the environment of the Church a beginning of development may be made, of a kind which would be impossible for any unbaptised person. Every baptised person, in the manner of one going to live in the country from out the city slum, must persevere in making use of his newly bestowed advantages. He may, if he so wills it, still reject them each and every one. On the other hand, within the Church there *may* at least be singled out for use the elements of a supernatural environment, long before the new Order of the Incarnation has been made coextensive with the whole world environment, and even before the visible Church within the world has herself been cleared from all disorder.

However, no baptised person may rest content with that minimal supernatural environment which sometimes seems to be all that Baptism into the Church can now bestow. Men and women within the Church do not find themselves in a new world order already supernaturally completely perfect and ready-made. Baptism is but a beginning within an environment of a supernaturally bestowed *potential* perfection. However, the initial advantages accruing to baptised individuals must be immediately reapplied to that environment itself, in order further to actualize its potential Divine order. The Kingdom of God, thus progressively enriched, must be made eventually to take into its new creation every single element of our fallen creation and, thus, at last shall indeed be made to engulf the whole unredeemed world. It is thus that baptised men and women, developing and growing "dialectically" within the supernatural environment of the Kingdom of God, perfecting it as they become perfected in it, and then themselves being further perfected as the perfection of the Kingdom is further enlarged in

this very process, can come again to their full stature as true human beings, that is, that they may be completely actualized anew in the image of God.

This view of Baptism as an actual change from a natural to a supernatural environment, a true new birth into the new world provided by the Incarnation, is one of the principle reasons why the Church now insists, whenever possible, upon Baptism in infancy. Those who maintain that Baptism should be postponed until a person is old enough to "decide for himself" as to whether he will come into the Church or not, are comparable to people who might suggest that a slum child should not be removed to a better environment until he too can decide for himself. Unfortunately, when such a child is old enough to do this, he may well have already contracted tuberculosis. Or, with an equal if fantastic logic, it might be urged that an infant should not be born physically into the natural world until he is old enough to decide for himself about the arrangements for his earthly life. He should be allowed to pick his family and social and economic class; or even to decide whether he wishes to come into the world at all. Parents have already made one tremendous and crucial decision in behalf of their child when, without even the possibility of consulting him, they bring him into the world and into the environment of their own family circle and home. If parents, on top of this, hesitate to bring the child into the new world of the Church, they show thereby that they themselves are not completely converted people. They themselves are not convinced that the Church really is the potentially new world of the Divine Life.

It should be further pointed out that the Sacrament of Baptism does not merely change the external social and spiritual environment. The Holy Spirit, working within the Sacrament, effects also an interior change in the individual. There is given with the Kingdom of Heaven an individual "inward and spiritual grace."¹² At this new birth, what might be called the "internal environment," as well as the external environment, is also changed. In the building up and formation of a Christian individual, the materials of the Christlike character consist not

¹² Prayer Book Catechism.

only of external social relationships, but also of those internal potentialities which must respond to them. At birth, every man has a vast and varied equipment of potential emotions, desires, motives, impulses, emerging out of that long antecedent lineage through which his physical organism has evolved. He also has his more specifically human potentialities for rational thought and freedom of action, inseparable from a rational human mind. These materials might be thought of as in some sense an internal environment, the environment which is peculiarly the property of every individual. This internal environment provides a large share of the material which he must organize into a perfected personality and which, when thus organized, he must bring into harmonious relationships with his external environment. In the Sacrament of Baptism, the Holy Spirit also acts upon this internal environment, reclaiming it from the disorder into which it too seems to have fallen within the natural world. Thus He makes it more tractable, more responsive to the supernatural elements of the simultaneously bestowed new external environment, more amenable to the use of the individual as he seeks to grow into "that which by nature he cannot have," the Divinely ordered, the re-created image of the Son of God.

It is well to note the further logical fact that at Baptism, Godparents should be regarded as rather more than those decorative adjuncts in which light they all too often appear. Godparents must be true supernatural parents to children who are born anew in Baptism into the Divine environment of the world of the Church. It is true that within the New Jerusalem can be found those environmental materials which are essential for the maturing of the newly born individual within it. But the materials of even the new world provided in the Incarnation must be mediated to the newly born person by others who are more spiritually mature within it. It would not be wise to leave a new born infant to fend physically and materially for itself, even in a home provided with the very best materials for its growth, for example, the best milk, the best warm water for baths, the best clothing. Far from thriving under such conditions, the unaided infant would probably die. Even the good

things of a physical environment must normally be mediated to every infant by its natural parents. Likewise, in the new supernatural world of the Church, the materials of the supernatural life must be mediated to the young and to the inexperienced. Godparents, therefore, should be practising Catholics; and their responsibilities as mature members of the Church are grave and serious. They undertake a position of great obligation to their Godchildren. In the supernatural family of the Church, Godchildren have a spiritual claim upon their Godparents for attention and care analogous to the claims they have upon their natural parents.

This building up of the Kingdom of God out of the world so that a fallen and disordered nature may be incorporated into the Order of the Incarnation Process, is what a Catholic means when he speaks of the "salvation of the world." The incorporation of men and women by the Sacrament of Baptism into this new world which is in process of being re-created in order that they may mature within it as supernaturally perfected creatures, is what he means when he speaks of the salvation of individual souls. According to these views of both individual and world salvation, the saying "extra ecclesia nulla salus"¹³ is a kind of truism and a tautology. To say one may not be "saved," in the Catholic sense, without being baptised into the Church, is to assert with pointless repetition: "One cannot be within the Church of the Incarnation without being in it."¹⁴

¹³ St. Cyprian (martyred A.D. 258), Letter 72, Section 21.

¹⁴ Since Christian salvation implies the incorporation of individuals into a particular group of people, this, according to the orthodox view, is also what is meant by being a Christian. To be a Christian means that one has undertaken a unique and a highly specialized job. It follows that in any given case, one either has, or has not, done this; and that one either has or has not begun a new social life in the manner appointed by the Founder of the social Organism which is the bearer of that life. Therefore to say that one may "be a Christian" by being "good," or by trying to "follow Christ," while remaining unbaptized, is not so much to say something which is untrue, as it is to repeat something which is irrational. It is like saying, for example, that one may "be a Mason" by believing in the spirit of fraternalism and by approving of the founding of orphanages and homes for the aged, while at the same time refusing to undergo any of the initiatory rites of the various degrees of Masonry. An active Mason would scarcely admit this claim. *A fortiori*, no unbaptised person can be called a Christian in the Catholic sense of the word. See St. Cyprian, Letter 51, Section 24: "Whoever he may be, and whatever he may be, he who is not in the Church of Christ is not a Christian."

Protestants, unfortunately, together with a large number of uninstructed Catholics, too often think of "salvation" as a purely individual or personal matter. Salvation in this individualistic sense seems to mean saving a soul "out of the world," so that it may escape the disastrous consequences of an evil life and may go, at death, to "heaven." Heaven, in turn, is thought of as a fully prepared place of bliss or everlasting happiness in the "next world," the world where the human soul goes after the death of the body. If one is "good" in this world, and if, as the saying goes, one "accepts Christ as a personal Saviour," then one can count on escaping the torments of hell, otherwise the just portion of everyone, and "get into heaven." Now the instructed Catholic should think but little of this kind of individualistic salvation, and should shun that legalistic ideology which seems to say, "If you are good you go to heaven; if you are bad you go to hell." *The Catholic is not even primarily interested in saving his own soul apart from other souls.* Such an emphasis, after all, would appear at bottom to be but another manifestation of that narrow self-regarding interest on which he has turned his back. Catholic salvation for the individual is unthinkable apart from a process of corporate salvation, the perfecting of the body of Christ through His Incarnation. We are "given the Kingdom of Heaven" at Baptism; but this Heaven, there bestowed on us, is not some remote and shadowy place of bliss beyond the grave, a next-worldly compensation and reward for good and long-suffering people. Heaven for the Catholic is instead that Kingdom of God into which, as it now begins to take shape and form in its initial natural substance here in this world, we have already been born while still alive in the flesh.

Between the Kingdom of Heaven forming in this world and the consummated and absolutely perfected Kingdom which is our eternal Heaven, there exists that same continuity which is discoverable between Our Lord's earthly life and His Risen and Ascended Life. The Kingdom into which we enter when we enter the Process of the Incarnation, must, if we are to be saved within it, itself be in process of being perfected by us here and now. Out of this world we must be forming the New Jerusalem, the City of God, a visible new creation which as

soon as possible must be brought, even here on earth, to the point of being fit for the reception of Our Lord at His Second Coming. He must one day find an earthly Kingdom sufficiently perfected that He may return to consummate it to all eternity. This is that Heaven of which the visible Church is both the seed and the seedling. Therefore we may not permit this forming heaven on earth to remain a mere beautiful but disembodied idea. It is our vocation as Catholics, by God's grace, to make it a visible fact. Furthermore, unless we do this we can have no clear assurance of some kind of individual personal "salvation." To us is entrusted the Incarnation of the Word in human history. To us is entrusted the laying of the foundation of an eternal Heaven in that natural substance of the Kingdom of God which emerges visibly here on earth. It may well be that it is only upon these conditions of our own active response and work that an eternal Heaven shall be found possible for us at all. Because, just as God Himself did not appear to men as "pure spirit"¹⁵ here on earth, but clothed Himself in flesh by an act which seems to have depended upon the free response of His Holy Mother; so also it is possible that He will not bestow upon us a "purely spiritual heaven" hereafter, until we too have responded by preparing a social body, the social extension of His Incarnation within which the Heaven of hereafter may first become Incarnate in the world of now. This is that "salvation" into which Catholics are baptised in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

At present it can, unfortunately, be urged that the Catholic Church, at least during the last few centuries, has but very imperfectly shown forth, visibly within the world, that new world of supernatural and re-ordered human relationships comprehending all the activities of life, which should properly characterize the Kingdom of God. On the contrary, she has allowed herself to be corrupted with that highly one-sided kind of atomistic Christianity which pretends to concern itself solely with the "salvation of individual souls." She has become infected with individualistic pietism, and being thus preoccupied with "saving souls" out of this disordered world into some nebulous

¹⁵ It will be recalled that such an idea was held by Gnostic heretics.

heaven of the next and future life, she has been indifferent to the fact that this same outside world has been all along organizing itself more and more thoroughly into a Kingdom of Anti-Christ. As a result, the Church is in danger of losing the possibility of saving even individual souls, because she has not consolidated her own peculiar re-created social environment in this world. She is now almost bereft of her social and chief resource for the *nurture* of a sound and re-created human *nature*.

It is true that the Church can still provide the rudiments of a supernatural social environment in her Sacraments and in a wealth of knowledge and revelation concerning God and His will for men. These are the most important elements of the Church's supernatural social content, and they have by no means been lost. The difficulty, however, is that while the Church can and still does supply the necessary spiritual content of the supernatural environment, she seems careless or indifferent about complementing her spiritual materials with any considerable wealth of practical social and economic relationships, within which her spiritual counsels and aids to the truly good life might be habitually, or still more important, functionally actualized in practice. The Church seems to believe that her spiritually new environment, which is of course bestowed in Baptism, will alone suffice for the salvation of man even while he is forced into evil patterns of behavior by virtue of not being "purely spiritual" himself, but by being, instead, very much in the flesh and within a world of physical matter. This is the same wearily old fallacy of imagining that men can lead good and "saved" lives while remaining actually at home within the unredeemed world, if only they get a spiritual help for this purpose from the Church, as from an extraneous source of grace. It may be questioned whether it could be consistently maintained that for this latter and quite erroneous view of "salvation," the Sacrament of Baptism would be necessary at all. For Baptism is necessary only because a completely new environment is to be bestowed, and the disordered world is, in potentiality at least, to be left completely behind. But a completely new environment demands that something *more* than a

skeleton spiritual world shall be provided by the Church to replace the natural world when the Sacrament of Baptism is administered.

As a matter of brute fact, those practical human relationships which do pretend to be actual functional parts of the Church's life, seldom get beyond such activities as women's sewing circles, parish fairs, "bingo" nights, amateur theatricals and, for some of the more prominent men of the community, the management of church finances. Even these relationships are seldom, if ever, subjected to any deep and radical criticism from the point of view of Christian social morality or economic justice, before they appear in the life of the Church. They are, instead, taken over without any question from the customary modes of behavior of the unredeemed world. In other words, even these relatively minor activities have only an apparent, rather than a truly functional, place in the organism of Our Lord's perfected humanity.

Because of this sad lack of suitable content in the practical social and economic relationships now included within the Church's visible organism, Baptism is in grave danger of conveying very imperfectly what may be called its "environmental grace." Men, women and children are still baptised into the Catholic Faith, but of the new social world which should actually and visibly incarnate that Faith, it becomes increasingly difficult to find a trace. Men find themselves baptised into a mystical idea, rather than into a practical, living, mystical social community. In response to the agonising and very practical question, "What shall I *do* to be saved,"¹⁰ Christianity is presented as a "spiritual" activity only, a means of curing the individual soul of sin. The baptised person looks about him, all too often in vain, for a community of the Incarnate Life in practical action into which he can, as he had had legitimate reason to hope he could, throw all his own life and his whole activity, losing his individual natural life to find it in the redeemed corporate supernatural life of the New Jerusalem. Instead of finding his own most profound and most Godlike potentialities liberated and ordered into the re-created cor-

¹⁰ Luke 10:25.

porate activity of Our Lord's Incarnate humanity, he receives on the contrary what seems to be merely a new call to a rather precious and intensive introspection, a suggestion that he embrace what might be called the "higher egotism," a preoccupation with a personal holiness so that he may get himself into a future heaven. This seems the sole end in view in much modern so-called Christianity.

The finest human spirits revolt from this perverted presentation of the religion of Our Lord. The finest and most intelligent men and women of the natural human world still long, in the midst of their frustration, to throw themselves completely into some corporate activity together with the rest of mankind for the salvation of the visible world. To their great credit, be it said, they are not permanently interested merely in saving their individual souls so long as this aim has little or no reference to the corporate welfare and salvation of their fellow men.

The Catholic Church which, during the early years of her life, was able to summon men to her Divinely revolutionary task in the world, no longer clearly gives this call. But, again to their credit be it said, men refuse to be permanently frustrated in the satisfaction of their will to corporate salvation, because this impulse is implanted in them as a part of their Divinely given personal equipment for life. If this impulse for cooperative effort finds no outlet in the Church as she now exists, men are bound to seek a better satisfaction on their own initiative. This is precisely why Communism and Fascism have had their present-day psychological success.

In order to justify this statement we need not discuss whether the teachers and leaders of the Communist and Fascist movements which are now spreading in the world have been right or wrong. We need not discuss whether the theories behind these movements approach the truth or not. The point is that the leaders of both Communists and Fascists have been able to issue a clear call to people asking them to give their individual allegiances to corporate movements which, it is asserted, will save the world here and now. Mussolini and Hitler, for example, have exalted the concept of a mystical, racial State. They have said, in effect, to individuals: "Lose yourselves in the glory of

the State. Sink your individualities completely, and the Fascist or Nazi States will emerge as the most glorious creations the world has yet seen." The theorists of the Communist Revolution from Marx and Engels through Lenin and Stalin have said in effect: "We have now found the way the universe in general and the history of man in particular works. All history goes forward by a process which is called the process of Dialectical Materialism. Throw yourselves into this process, be intelligent enough to come down on the right side at the right time, which is now. This is your true freedom; for it is the truth which will set you free. You will find your present unsatisfactory, separated, frustrated individual lives caught up in the mighty flow of a dialectical process which at this very moment stands on the brink of accomplishing the final economic and political revolution. Throw yourselves into this, and you will emerge gloriously into the economic classless society now just coming to birth."

It is not strange that millions of young men and women have responded to such calls, because, whether the goals of their new allegiances are true or false, at least they find here in this complete self-giving an immediate satisfaction for one of the profoundest as well as one of the highest and best impulses potential in human nature. These are challenges to a "totalitarian" self-giving, and calls to "totalitarian" activities. Two thousand years ago the Catholic Church also gave such a call, and, as a result, came into a more furious conflict with the corrupt and disordered world of her time than even Communism does today. The Church, simply by being uncompromisingly true to Our Lord, interfered, or threatened to interfere, in every cultural, economic and political activity of her environment. She touched and transformed every worldly emotion, every idea and psychological attitude of those men and women who were baptised into her new world of the Incarnation. Let her today renounce her satisfaction with the self-regarding pietism of her members, and summon men again to that ancient and very practical revolutionary attack upon a world which is no less fallen than that of ancient Rome and Palestine. When she does this, men and women in their millions will once again

group themselves in sacrificial giving under the ensign of the Cross. Let her not say that a movement like Communism is bad, but rather that it is not enough. At its best, it would be a valuable preparation of that soil of the world in which the Organism of the Incarnation still must grow. But we go beyond humanity to God, beyond the "economic classless society" to the social organism of the Kingdom of Heaven, beyond the perfection of the world in time to its transubstantiation in an Eternal Sacrifice. *There is no earthly flag one-half so red as is the Life-Blood of Him who still hangs upon the Cross.*

We who have inherited the ideologies of the political democracies—although at the same time we submissively put up with an autocratic industrial economy—have been taught to fear every idea of a totalitarian social organization. But why should Catholics fear totalitarianism? Rightly interpreted, the Kingdom of God is totalitarian. The Christian must seek complete and cooperative self-identification with his fellows in the Incarnation; not so-called "self-realization" or "self-expression" while remaining in an individualistic and disordered world. Furthermore, Christians can seek an individualistic extrication from a fallen world only at their peril. What we have to fear therefore, is only an unredeemed *human* totalitarianism. We are indeed right in fearing to give ourselves completely to any human state however mystically conceived, or to any human leader however alluringly offered for our allegiance. Or, again, we ought certainly to shrink from utter self-giving to some mindless material process, even when we are confidently told that this process will issue in the highest earthly happiness for all mankind. We Catholics, on the other hand, are no less called upon to give ourselves utterly to a Person who is at once human and Divine, who is at once in time and in eternity. By the same token we are called to give ourselves utterly to that redeeming and revolutionary Process of the Incarnation in human history which has its eternal focus in the Person of Our Lord.

We can respond to such a call as this both with enthusiasm and without fear of eventual disaster, because in this total giving of ourselves to Our Lord and to His work, we do ac-

tually lose our lives; but only to find them again to all eternity. We come to the Altar with the bread and wine of the world. We are asked to lift these things to Him no matter what the cost to us may be in the world as it now exists still unredeemed: the cost in effort, in persecution, in suffering, in obloquy, in financial or personal loss. We are called upon to give ourselves without thought of worldly human prudence and without thought of individualistic reward or return. But, after this self-giving, Our Lord responds as no merely human leader ever can respond. He gives Himself back to us; and with Himself He restores to us our own lives which He has just received in our Sacrifice. We receive our Holy Communions. We have given all. We now receive ourselves graciously restored by Him, in order to continue in the world the work which still remains for us to do. Thus, in the Catholic Totalitarianism, if it may so be called, there is always a gracious trust, not of course in "human nature" as it is imperfectly actualized in the world, but a trust in that human nature which has been brought out of its fallen state through Baptism into the world of the Incarnation, and which is sacrificed to God in every Mass. Individuals redeemed in this way can again be trusted by Our Lord with their own lives, and can be sent back with personal initiative and freedom not only unimpaired and unhampered, but actually strengthened and set completely free. The tragedy of the present age is clearly seen when millions of the finest men and women of our time lose themselves in merely human and temporal totalitarian movements. They do of course find a present psychological satisfaction and an immediate sense of self-realization. But in the end, and perhaps, alas! when it is too late, they must find themselves not set free but irrevocably bound. They get an immediate satisfaction of that impulse to corporate social living for which the Church has failed, to her shame, to provide an outlet. The tragic thing is that at the end of every merely humanist self-giving there can be no Holy Communion. No human leader can restore back to themselves the lives of those who have made their sacrifices to him, restore them perfectly united with himself and none the less set completely free. That is something which only God can do through His Incarnate Son.

Signs are not lacking that at the heart of the present totalitarian states there is a haunting fear, a great unwillingness to give back that freedom of body, mind and spirit to the masses who have cheerfully made their now irrevocable sacrifices upon altars of human devising. Any merely humanist corporate movement, whether Communist or otherwise, must in the end be seen for what it is. It stands revealed as an attempt to accomplish in the world the work of the Incarnation, while denying to creation the centrality of God, and denying to the re-creation of the natural world the centrality of His Incarnate Son. Logically the very existence of God must eventually be denied. Human totalitarianism is man's pathetic attempt to do for himself what can ultimately be accomplished only by the redeeming Son of Man, working through His Catholic Sacramental Church. Man-devised systems for corporate salvation, while often giving much immediate human satisfaction, invite the allegiances of men only to bind them fast forever. Thus, however good the temporary results of these systems, they must turn out in the end to be demonic, and not Divine. Men, in such self-giving, enter the bondage of hell. They are not baptised into that freedom of the Kingdom of Heaven which, through the rebestowal of Our Lord in the Holy Communion after perfect Sacrifice, is always renewed and restored.

"But," someone may urge, "where is this Catholic Church, this visible and true community of the Incarnation, into which we are born at Baptism, and through which we may work beyond any mere human totalitarian effort into the Kingdom of God? Surely the great mass of nominal Catholics exhibit neither a comprehension of their true vocation, nor any meek and self-forgetting willingness to accept it. They are altogether gone after a religion of personal piety, seemingly leaving most of the intelligent corporate action for the practical re-ordering of the world to others. Furthermore, at least one very large and powerful branch of the Catholic Church seems to exhibit that same fear and distrust of the abilities and goodness of her own communicants which it has just been averred is the fatal danger inherent in human totalitarian states. She seems, with strange lack of faith in her Divine Lord, to be afraid of giving the Holy

Communion unreservedly back into the hands of His own people, with all that calm trust in individual freedom which it implies. She seems unable to bring herself to believe that God intends even now to continue that great risk which inheres in His Incarnation, and that thus, even now, He would give Himself defenseless into the hands of a world which He intends to save, even as He did once in a manger in Bethlehem. Much of the Catholic Church appears to think it prudent to guard Our Lord Incarnate from the dangers of the world by strangely human and man-made means, attempting to protect Him from the vulgar touch much more securely than He would wish to guard Himself. Thus, instead of dispensing a supernatural individual freedom within a corporately redeemed world, the Church seems timidly to be allying herself with the Fascist brand of human totalitarianism. She seems more interested in preserving herself as a human institution, than as the Divinely constituted bearer of the Incarnate Life. The Church, utterly unlike her Lord, will not venture Bethlehem because she fears the Cross."

It must be admitted that in numerous portions of the visible Church her corporate and revolutionary vocation seems almost forgotten. It is also true that she permits herself, with dreadful faithlessness, to be gripped by a human fearfulness; and that when she is thus timid and afraid, she tends toward a human or even demonic totalitarianism. But for us, the answer to all these objections is that the true Catholic Church, visible in all her potential power, can be and will be immediately revived among those who, without abandoning the universal Sacramental Fellowship, no matter how corrupt it may appear, are willing to start anew, consciously and intelligently, to recapture the full corporate implications of the Sacramental Life. The words "Repent and be baptised, for the Kingdom of God is at hand" are as true today as ever. The Church, like her Lord Himself, shall live anew by resurrection. Her life will be renewed from within. If, at the Altar of some tiny Parish or of some little Oratory two or three turn in earnest, without reservation of self, willing to face destruction if need be, to perfect the world within Our Lord's humanity as a fitting cor-

porate sacrifice to God, there will the Catholic Church be renewed in all her Divine might. There, under the forms of the Church's consecrated Bread and Wine, is Our Lord, whole and entire. Christ is not divided. He simply awaits *our* sacrifice. He waits until He may build His Kingdom, beginning anew today it may be with those relatively few faithful Catholics who understand His plan. We who are baptised into Him have but to turn to Him, vowed to this devoted activity, knowing and counting the tremendous cost,¹⁷ but ready to face it in our complete mutually cooperative self-giving, literally holding nothing back. It is then that the resurrection of the Church will start anew, and the Kingdom of God once more start spreading in the world.

This complete cooperative self-giving is what is meant by our repentance. It is the repentance which makes the Kingdom of Heaven "at hand." It consists in true Christian meekness, which is cooperativeness in the presence of the summons of our Leader and our Divine Head. It is that meekness of self-oblation which Our Lady showed when, without personal reservation, she replied to the Angelic Salutation: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to thy word." These were the words which first opened the way for the Incarnation. Nothing short of that same meek cooperativeness on our parts can again open the way for the Incarnate Life that it may appear among us now.

It is clear that this is no passive and inactive meekness.¹⁸ It consists in a determination to think nothing of ourselves or of our careers in the world, as the world is at present constituted; nothing of ourselves in comparison with our vocations as baptised cooperative builders of the Kingdom of God. We will not withhold ourselves, even though this Kingdom in its making shatter the present world to its foundations. It seems an impossible task which we embrace. We are so few in number and the work to be done is so appallingly great. We may be compelled first to destroy much, before we can rebuild. Never-

¹⁷ Cf. Luke 14:28-33.

¹⁸ "It has nothing to do with the easy-going amiability which often masquerades under that name." *New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, Gore.

theless, few as we are, we have our assurance of victory. "Fear not, little flock," Our Lord still says. "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."¹⁹ And even though we should now be reduced to a mere handful of faithful baptised people, there among us is the Catholic Church, Our Lord's growing Incarnation. If our oblation of self be really complete, Our Lord still quite literally promises to us: "Blessed be ye Meek,²⁰ for ye shall inherit"—not some nebulous starry future heaven of the skies, but rather as an essential and substantial preliminary—"the earth."

¹⁹ Luke 12:32.

²⁰ Matt. 5:5.

XI

SACRAMENTAL SYMBOLISM

THE number of the Sacraments of the Catholic Church, according to a tradition at least six or seven centuries old, is now put at seven. At first glance this may seem an arbitrary number. It was established definitely in the days of the Medieval Schoolmen and confirmed later by the Council of Trent. As a matter of fact the Sacraments have not always been so clearly set apart from her other rites and ceremonies, even by authoritative spokesmen of the Church herself. The great theologians of the Patristic period often used the word "Sacrament" in a relatively vague way. They so termed many Christian religious rites or even parts of rites which we today could not include under our more specific, or, as might perhaps be better said, our more technical definition of the word. It does not in the least follow from this, however, as it is in fact sometimes quite erroneously argued, that those corporate acts of the Church which today have the word "Sacrament" exclusively applied to them are not now recognizable as having possessed from their very beginning a unique, common character of their own. In the past the word itself may have been loosely used. The corporate acts of the Church which we now call "Sacraments" are none the less clearly distinguishable, in their radical and profound operation, from all her other acts.

If this is so, the Church, at any time of her history whether early or late, is quite within the competence of her proper authority when she decrees that one particular set of seven sacred rites shall alone be known as her Sacraments. In this way she sets them apart and emphasizes their unique character, and distinguishes them from all her other religious offices and ceremonies. Other rites of the Church which may have been referred to as "Sacraments" in a less definite use of the word at various times and places, must, from the time of the exact definition of the word, be described in other terms. This

seems to be the best account of the Church's action in fixing the use of her own terminology, when she has seen fit to confine the application of the word "Sacrament" to seven unique symbolic acts. The Church has not herself invented the unique quality of her Sacraments. She has, instead, recognized that seven solemn religious rites, some of them beyond all doubt directly established by Our Lord, and some of them emerging into the same category under the authority of her growing corporate experience, have such a quality. Furthermore, the peculiar nature of the Sacraments is such that they are recognized as being irreducibly essential in the maintenance and development of her corporate wholeness within the Process of the Incarnation.

We have by now abundantly seen that this Process of the Incarnation is twofold. It first marshalls and orders a newly perfected creation upon the natural level out of the disordered elements of our universe. This part of the Process is the continuing growth and enlargement of Our Lord's humanity. But this perfection, as in the case of Our Lord Himself, while it remains within the realm of nature is one which remains contingent. It also remains finite and limited in scope, in so far as at any particular time its task of engulfing all of our disorder within its own order has not been brought to completion. And it remains mortal, in that within nature "all things come to an end."¹ However, Our Lord's natural perfection has now been carried by Him into super-nature; it is received from contingency into Absolute Perfection; it has passed from finiteness into potential universality, and from mortality into immortality and deathlessness. It is thus that Our Lord has "prepared a place for us"² into which the Church may forever after and to the end of time lift up her own newly created achievements upon the natural level in such wise that these, taken into and united with Our Lord's accomplishment now made absolute, can also enter into an eternal abiding place within the Presence of God.

The uniqueness of the Catholic Sacraments consists in this,

¹ Psalm 119:96.

² John 14:2.

that they are the Church's Divinely provided avenues through which her own offerings taken out of nature are conveyed beyond nature into Our Lord's Risen and Ascended Life, and through which Our Lord's creative Self moves in turn from out His present transcendent level into the corporate body of His Church within the world. They are thus the openings through which time grows into eternity, and eternity puts forth its living roots into time. They are the doors through which a re-created nature grows into heaven itself and through which heaven, in turn, comes into that same nature to garner from it a fuller and more extended content. They are the opening ways through which the world of matter, perfected according to all the potentialities of its own nature upon the level of our creation, flowers and bears fruit within that world of spirit into which Our Lord has gone, and through which, in turn, Our Lord as Spirit continues and extends His Incarnation within that same material world.

We have been discussing the two so-called Major Sacraments, Holy Communion and Holy Baptism, in considerable detail. These are the two Sacraments which the Book of Common Prayer describes as being "generally necessary to salvation."³ In this description, the word *salvation* must be understood in its specifically Catholic sense. The reference here is not to salvation understood exclusively in the sense of an ultimate union of certain individual souls with God. We must confess at least a partial ignorance concerning what may be the ultimate requirements for, what may be "necessary" for, such salvation. No one, for example, should be bold enough to assert dogmatically that the souls of such men as Socrates or Plato or Marcus Aurelius, may not, as *individuals*, be brought at length in the providence of God, even without Baptism and outside the body of the Church, to have their share in that blessed and eternal life which He may will to bestow upon all men who, whether as Christians or not, seek Him faithfully according to the light vouchsafed to them. However, this is not Catholic salvation in its fullness. Catholics give to the word something much more

³ Prayer Book Catechism. "Generally" does not mean "usually," but rather, "in general and for all who would be Christians."

than this individualistic content. Catholic salvation begins with an entrance into that visible part of the Divine organism of the Church which is present and growing in the world. In order to be "saved" in this sense, men must be incorporated into the Incarnation Process and must also develop within it. They must enter into and grow within that new social organism of the Church which is the bearer of the Order of the Incarnate Life and which is engaged in the process of saving all the fallen world. Obviously then, from this point of view, the two Major Sacraments are "generally necessary," because they must be received by all who wish to begin to live and to continue to live as Catholic Christians. For Baptism is the Sacrament of a new birth into the Church. Therefore without it no one can enter upon this way of Catholic salvation. And the Mass is the Sacrament wherein the natural and supernatural levels of the Process of the Incarnation are mediated, the one into the other. It is the Sacrament wherein Our Lord's continuing humanity and His Eternal Godhead meet and flow together. Therefore without it no one, while still in the level of nature, can continue to take his full part in the process of Catholic salvation.⁴

The remaining five or Lesser Sacraments, as they are called, are those of Confirmation, Holy Order, Penance, Holy Matrimony and Holy Unction. We shall see presently that these tend to associate themselves with the two Major Sacraments. Confirmation, for example, is a kind of continuing and completion of Baptism, although Baptism, in case of necessity, suffices of itself for full entrance into the Church. The other four can be associated more or less closely with the Holy Communion. In particular, the Sacrament of Holy Order is invariably given within the actual framework of the celebration of a Mass, and is thus always received as a special part of the content of the

⁴ Infants and young persons baptised into the Church sometimes die before they have received the Holy Communion. They have been grafted into the organism of the Church and have therefore entered upon the way of salvation; but they do not continue their lives under Sacramental conditions, since they are removed from the natural world. It is clear, however, that they continue in the Church and, in God's providence, will therefore have their part in His consummated Kingdom at the end of time. In such cases Baptism alone suffices to salvation. The Holy Communion is a Sacrament *necessary* only for those who, remaining on earth, would continue to live a Catholic life and would have their part in God's Kingdom-in-the-making, here and now.

Sacrifice of the Altar. Penance precedes the offering of Mass as a preparation of individuals for their participation in that work. Also the usual rule for Catholics is to offer their marriages to God at Masses celebrated for that specific purpose at the time the contracting couples receive the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. And Holy Unction is usually administered at the same time that a sick person receives his Holy Communion.

The Lesser Sacraments are not "generally necessary to salvation" in the way in which the two major ones are. Women are expressly excluded from Holy Orders and relatively few men receive them. Neither is Marriage a necessary Sacrament for individuals, although it is obviously necessary for the welfare and continuation of the Church. Not all people marry and, indeed, express vows of chastity are taken by large numbers of both men and women who find that they have vocations for lives as monks or nuns. For the remaining three Sacraments it may be said that it is highly desirable that all Catholics should receive them when they have proper occasion. It can further be said that for the carrying forward of the Church's corporate work of the salvation of the world in all its integrity, it is essential that many or most of her members should at some time receive them. However it will appear clear when we come to examine them, that Confirmation, Penance and Holy Unction have not, in individual lives, the same or equal central importance from the point of view of participation in the Incarnation Process as have the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.

We have been investigating at length the manner in which the Process of the Incarnation comes into its wide and progressive operation within the world, through the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. So far no attempt has been made to define the word "Sacrament" or to set forth in words an analysis of the Sacramental Principle. This omission has been intentional, because it is usually more profitable to define words after we possess a certain degree of familiarity with the realities for which they stand than to attempt precise definitions in advance of this. Now that this degree of familiarity has been somewhat gained, it will be well for reasons of convenience, if for

no other, and before proceeding to a fuller examination of the Lesser Sacraments, to attempt a more careful definition of what is meant by the word "Sacrament" itself.

The Prayer Book Catechism defines a Sacrament as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof." This is an excellent definition, but so compact as to be almost elliptical. In particular it employs certain words such as "sign," "grace," "means" and "pledge" in ways which will repay a careful elucidation. In the first place, it is not on the surface perfectly clear, unless one take the careful phrase "ordained by Christ Himself" as the explanation, just why a Sacrament defined in this way should ever be "generally necessary." At the most, this definition seems to make all Sacraments very desirable or advisable in the Christian life, but none of them essential. Therefore we need perhaps chiefly to understand how the "outward and visible sign" here spoken of is related, in a Sacrament, to the "inward and spiritual grace." Otherwise it is difficult to grasp how the particular inward grace conveyed by it cannot, in general, be mediated in any other manner whatever.

For here again, no one would for a moment maintain that God's grace—that is, His strengthening supernatural help, His power given to us that we may persevere, His guidance in the task of Christian living—is not often bestowed apart from and outside of Sacramental action. The Holy Spirit enters individual lives whenever men and women open their hearts freely to His entrance there and with Him there comes a Divinely given power, a new illumination, which is the very thing we refer to as the grace of God. Especially does grace come into lives of persevering prayer and, thus received, is a necessary supplement to Sacramental grace. The Catholic Sacraments never supplant prayer, but rather both require and deepen it.

Furthermore, God's grace as given to men cannot be divided in its essence into various categories which can be properly distinguished as "different kinds of grace." All grace is of God and is therefore simple and indivisible, like its source. If we, for our part, distinguish its reception in various ways, if we refer

to "external grace" or "internal grace," if we speak of "prevenient grace"⁵ or of "Sacramental grace," we may not think that we are doing more than distinguishing various ways in which one grace is given to men, or alluding to the various levels of experience upon which it is received. It follows, therefore, that if the Sacraments are "necessary" in any literal understanding of that word, this cannot be because grace never comes in other ways, nor yet because Sacramental grace differs in its essence from grace otherwise received. If the Sacraments are "necessary" it must be for reasons already suggested in discussing their unique character. They are "necessary" because of the manner in which their inward and spiritual grace is related to their outward and visible signs, and hence, because of a unique and otherwise unattainable relationship in which the Sacraments place those who receive God's grace through their channels both to God Himself and to His Incarnate Son.

The Sacramental "outward and visible sign" of the Prayer Book definition is what we would call a symbol of something else which is taking place at the same time. Unfortunately, in present-day popular usage, a symbol is thought of as some event or object which merely calls some other event or object or idea more or less vividly to the minds of those who experience the symbol. Just how vivid this recalling may be in any particular case depends upon the character or the disposition or the knowledge or the temperament of individual persons involved. Some symbols, especially perhaps the symbolic acts of the Sacraments, are thought of by many as so universally edifying and of so ancient and sacred tradition that no one pretending to be a Christian can afford to neglect them. However, it is all too often supposed that if certain people, for example the Quakers, do not find such symbols edifying, they are justified in dispensing with them. It is argued that the use of symbolism, Sacramental symbolism included, is only for those whom it helps psychologically. It is even suggested in some quarters that the more "advanced" people are both intellectually and spiritually, the less need they will feel in their religious lives for symbolic practices. They

⁵ This is the name given to God's grace bestowed for a certain action in advance of the actualization of the need.

should be able, more than others less fortunate, to approach "directly" their spiritual goal. Thus, for many, to call a Sacrament a symbol, is not only to make it inessential, but to put it in a category slightly beneath the attention of the more intelligent and spiritually superior of our present generation. On this view, a symbol would be a thing which could be called necessary or essential only for children, for the "simple," or for the ignorant.

In order to clarify this kind of thinking, we must acquire a much more accurate understanding of the meaning of the word "symbol" or "sign" than that supplied by the foregoing vulgar notion. As a matter of fact, symbolism is of various kinds, and for our present purpose three different degrees or orders of symbols may be usefully distinguished. Two of these orders of symbolism have already been carefully and clearly defined for us by Dr. Inge, the late Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral.⁶ We shall ourselves presently further distinguish a third order.

The first order of symbolism, according to Dr. Inge, is that of a purely customary association of a symbol with the thing which is signified. Examples of this kind of arbitrary association of one thing with another would be a crown as a symbol of Royalty or the letters upon this page as symbols of particular varieties of vocal sounds. As far as we can see, there is no necessary or essential connection, outside of long tradition and custom, between a crown and a king, or a letter and a sound. It follows that any other symbols might even now be arbitrarily selected either for a king or for vocal sounds, and, provided the public in general were educated in the recognition of these new symbols in their correct associations with the things they symbolize, the new signs would serve the purposes of the older traditional symbols equally well.⁷ Symbolism of this first order is an entirely arbitrary matter, although longstanding custom may have given such sanction to certain specific symbols that they would prove very difficult to alter. On the other hand, there is seldom any urgent reason for altering them. Symbolism of this order is

⁶ *Christian Mysticism*, Bampton Lectures, 1899. London, pp. 250ff.

⁷ The so-called phonetic letters sometimes used in dictionaries for indicating the pronunciation of foreign words are excellent examples of recently invented and arbitrary symbols.

actually nothing more than a widely used, generally understood, but arbitrary, code.

There is a second order of symbolism in which the bonds between symbols and that which is symbolized seem of a much more immediate and necessary kind than any arbitrary or merely customary association could provide. For example, there come moments and experiences, it may be while we look upon the beauty of a sunset, it may be while we sense the morning loveliness of a spring garden, or listen to birdsong in the summer woods, in which we may well feel that we are in the presence of a visible or otherwise sensible beauty which has profound roots within an unsensed Reality lying behind these immediate and, what we take to be surface, manifestations of its very Self. Within the experiences of natural events we catch a hint, at least, of a deeper Being here partly revealed and partly veiled. We may think, for instance, that within a sunset there are values and beauties which reflect values which reside within the Absolute Beauty of the Being of God. Many natural events and appearances may be taken to be symbols of a Reality which stands behind them, and upon which this deeper Reality rises, as it were, to the surface of our world, floats for a brief moment more clearly revealed than at other more commonplace times, and then disappears. Such natural events, so considered and so interpreted, are symbols which, it would seem, can by no means be detached or separated from the deeper Reality which they symbolize; since they are, so it is believed, partial manifestations or even Self-revelations of that Reality itself.⁸ Symbolism of this second order is most often found in the symbolic interpretation of nature. Probably the chief prophet of Nature Symbolism is the poet Wordsworth, who sings touchingly of his own experiences: "To me the meanest flower that blows can give Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."⁹

It is contended by many, and unless we have here misunder-

⁸ If a crown originally represented the halo of light about the head of a divine being, the King, and if written letters were originally hieroglyphs and pictures of the objects which they once signified, then these things also, in their beginning, were symbols of the second order. They have now long since ceased to have this kind of necessary connection with the things they symbolize.

⁹ *Intimations of Immortality*, last line.

stood him, also by Dr. Inge, that the Christian Sacraments are rites or ceremonies, systems of simple acts which symbolize the great truths or realities of our religion in this second order of symbolism. The Sacraments are not mere arbitrary symbols, because they could not be substituted by other rites or ceremonies which would serve their identical purpose. On the contrary, for example, the Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper is a sacred rite which was instituted by Our Lord Himself and was endowed by Him with a special significance of His love for us in connection with His own death and resurrection. Even apart from this Dominical institution of the Holy Communion, it might perhaps be maintained that some sort of meal in fellowship, shared by religious people, might well be a symbol of the second order, in that it could be thought of as a direct manifestation of the thing which it symbolizes. It might be urged that there is something more than an arbitrary or merely conventional connection between a common sharing of food and drink by a group of people, and that spirit of fellowship and brotherly love of which they are using their action as a symbol. Instead of this being an arbitrary association of ideas, it might be thought of as a symbolic act which could not possibly be separated from the Being of God Himself who, within such a rite, would be manifested as the source and author of all love. On this basis it might even be argued that a symbolic fellowship meal, taken as this kind of symbol, could not possibly be adequately substituted by any other symbolic things or acts.¹⁰

Considered, then, as symbols of the second order, the Sacraments are events within which we believe that we can discover, with an unusual degree of clearness, spiritual laws operating, spiritual values emerging, which have their roots deep within that Reality which, in its various aspects, the respective Sacraments thus make accessible to our minds and hearts. But, if this kind of symbolism were to exhaust our description of the Catholic Sacraments, it would be difficult to see what convincing reply in behalf of their use could be given to someone who might claim that he found it equally or even more edifying to

¹⁰ On the other hand, we have to take cognizance of the fact that the Society of Friends does not find this symbolism either helpful or edifying.

worship God "in the open air," "under the blue dome of heaven," on the golf links, or in riding in an automobile.¹¹ Here, one may find for oneself exactly that same order of symbolic expression of the Nature of God, under the forms of the created nature of earth or sea or sky, which the Church Sacraments purport to give to us. Indeed, it may be urged by some that nature symbols, if rightly apprehended, afford an even better approach to God than do the Sacraments, since they are outside the confinement of formally prescribed rites and ceremonies and are in no danger of losing their vivid freshness and becoming "formalized." The matter of the nature symbol differs, of course, from the matter of the Church Sacraments, but the symbolism itself is of exactly the same order. While it may thus be admitted that for those who use them the Sacraments are very vivid symbols, nevertheless they cannot be said to be unique in their kind or that they have a qualitative as well as a quantitative distinction which sets them apart from every possible nature symbolism. In the Protestant view of the Church, it is difficult to understand how the Sacraments can ever be thought of as anything more than symbols of this second order, and of this order of symbols many valid examples are to be found outside the Church, especially within a symbolic interpretation of the natural world.

In the Catholic view, however, the Sacraments of the Church are actions of such an order that they may be singled out from among all other actions or events in the whole world and thus, in their own right, have a quality which makes them utterly unique. They therefore have a symbolism which can be described as one of a third order, one which can be found only in connection with the Sacraments themselves. For the Sacraments are those sensible, functional operations within the Organism of the Incarnation, as it spreads in our natural world, whereby men and women, if they will voluntarily and cooperatively permit it, are taken from their individual, discrete and separated

¹¹ It is somewhat easier to refute on their own ground those sentimentalists who exclaim: "To me all life is a sacrament!" It is pertinent to ask such people what the sacramental value is which they find in world wars, the Nazi persecution of Jews, English oppression of India or in the slums and brothels of their own cities. All these things are parts of "life."

statutes and, as living food of that Organism, are ordered, first, into Our Lord's humanity, and subsequently, into His Risen Life. And this is accomplished in such wise that we are made one body with Him¹² as He nourishes His Incarnation upon both material and spiritual elements available within His created but disordered world. It is for this reason that the Catholic Sacraments are called *effectual* Symbols. By Our Lord's provision within His Church and by His positive action within those Symbols given to her, they act positively upon all who receive them. If we enter into them worthily, that is, with an express intention of as full a cooperation with their processes as we can give, we find ourselves taken into a new corporate Order infinitely beyond anything possible to human achievement, even using to the full the grace of God mediated in every other possible way. On the other hand, if we enter into them lightly or uncooperatively, this does not mean that the processes of the Sacraments are thereby rendered lifeless, or that simply nothing at all happens to us. By way of analogy, a grain of radium might be taken by one ill with cancer as the very symbol of future health and happiness within this world. It is a fact, however, that this active element must be properly used. If it be handled carelessly or ignorantly, it may cause not restoration of health but instead, the most frightful and death-dealing burns.¹³ Likewise, the processes of the Sacramental acts depend ultimately not upon us, but upon Our Lord. Therefore the uncooperative and the heedless who come unprepared and thoughtlessly within their ambit, may well find that they do this not to their salvation but to their damnation.¹⁴ In such cases, just as worthless or poisonous food may be ejected unconsumed by a living physical body, so also, the trivial and the unfaithful within the Sacraments may find themselves ejected into outer darkness when, eventually excluded from the corporate Order of the Incarnation, there shall remain for them but weeping and gnashing of teeth.¹⁵ It is for these grave reasons that the

¹² American Prayer Book: Order of Holy Communion.

¹³ Our Lord once remarked: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10:28). The reference is, of course, to God.

¹⁴ I Cor. 11:29.

¹⁵ Matt. 8:12.

Catholic Sacraments are Symbols which are said to act *ex opere operato*. Through the outward and visible signs is accomplished something, it may be a grace, it *may* be a judgment, within the lives of those upon whom they operate; and the Sacraments do this just as surely as digestion and breathing accomplish something, as those bodily functions operate upon the food and air which are appropriated physiologically into any living organism.

The Sacraments, then, are symbols of a third order because men and women in the process of the corporate salvation of the world become inextricably involved in the processes of their symbolism. This kind of thing cannot be said of any conceivable symbolism which gets no further than that of the second order. We may, for example, gaze upon a sunset and find our hearts and minds uplifted to that God who has revealed something of His Glory in the glory of this natural symbol. The fact remains that no one can become an intrinsic part, body, soul and spirit, of that actual sunset itself. No one can ever be objectively united to or incorporated into the Divine Life Incarnate by entering directly into the sunset and becoming an integral functional element of that beautiful event. In addition, our hypothetical sunset can exist in all its own integrity whether we behold it or not. Indeed, a symbolic quality is not a necessary property of sunsets in general. This quality depends upon our use of a particular sunset, and a sunset is therefore a complete sunset whether or not it be so used. The Sacramental Symbols, on the other hand, are not only not complete but they are not possible unless human beings are involved in them, because human beings are their most essential elements. Within these symbols, men and women are made direct and functional parts of the operations of those various qualities or aspects of the Divine Life which the Sacraments mediate to them. Furthermore, this fact does not derive from any human attitude or interpretation, but ultimately only from Our Lord working within the Sacramental Acts.

Thus, as we have already seen, in the Mass there is unveiled for us in time the Eternal Sacrifice of the Cross. This unveiling takes place within the Mass under the material symbols of bread

and wine. It takes place, that is, under material signs taken from the natural world. But within these signs we, as living human beings, are already inextricably involved in advance of their use. It is we who, within the bread and wine, from out the natural order of the world, are placed upon the Altars of the Church and are offered up to God. And it is, in turn, among us and into us—since we are the component parts of the corporate historical extension of the Incarnation in this world—that the Son of Man comes, emerging from His eternal dwelling place into a moment of our history. Thus within the Sacramental events we are, as it were, *entrained*. We are carried along into the organically ordered stream of God's own Life as He clothes Himself with His creation. It is as if, when we might be watching a sunset, we were bodily caught up into it, so that when the glory of that particular event began to fade and to return into the Being of God, whence we believe it drew all its own beauty, we too were withdrawn with it and found ourselves appropriated into the Divine Life. The analogy is both fantastic and inadequate, but it is meant to be suggestive of the kind of process which takes place within the Sacraments of the Church.

The Sacraments, therefore, can reasonably be described as symbols of a third order, since those who partake of them are not merely brought into contact with that deep Reality which is symbolized, but, through being received by Our Lord as actual parts of the symbols themselves, are enmeshed and organically incorporated into that Reality, incorporated into the Process of the Incarnate Life.

Catholic Sacramental Symbolism is, to say the least, a very thoroughgoing kind of symbolism. It is fair to call it a symbolism of a unique order, since it cannot be found elsewhere. For the Sacraments are systems of events bestowed upon the Catholic Church by Our Lord Himself as the instruments of His abiding life and action within His continuing body, which she is. They are focal activities, making actual within the created world by means of particular events that continuous Process of the Incarnation which, through the Church, emerges into the world and then carries its newly created order within creation out of that creation into eternity. This is the reason

why the Sacraments have no complete existence apart from the whole life of the Sacramental Catholic Body. They are life functions of that Body and outside the Church lapse, at best, into a symbolism of the first and second orders. Torn from their living context and taken outside the Church, the Sacraments appear to function only as some heart or other organ, separated from its parent body, can be made to function for a time if kept alive in a man-devised apparatus of a biophysical experimental laboratory. But the Sacramental Church has her own corporate life wholly on the border line or even within the very wall of partition between the world of time and the world of eternity; between the world of fleeting temporal values and the world of eternal values; between the world of mortality and decay and the world of immortality and life; between the world of human disorder and the world of Divine Order; between the world of frustration of man's highest potentialities and the world of their complete liberation through grace into a Divine activity; between the world of bondage to a material historical process, harassed with uncontrolled passions and prejudices, and the world of freedom from all these bonds in the consummated Kingdom of God. Through the symbolic gateways of the Sacraments we who have been conveyed by one of them¹⁶ into the Kingdom of God then continue to cross and recross this wall of partition; we pass back and forth between time and eternity, gathering the earth and all the fullness thereof, all the manifold richness immanent in life, into the heaven of the Incarnation; we bear in our own persons, which are essential parts of every Sacramental Symbol, that Jerusalem which now is and is in bondage with her children, into the place of that New Jerusalem which is above, and free.¹⁷

These are the reasons why the Catholic Sacraments are not mere symbols of the first or second orders, not mere aids to other good activities, not even mere sources of grace and supernatural strength while we ourselves remain within this world. They are, instead, central and cardinal acts of a unique symbolic order all their own. They are our chief and most absorb-

¹⁶ *I.e.* Baptism.

¹⁷ Gal. 4:25-26.

ing creative occupations, without which no other good activities and accomplishments can be assimilated into the Incarnation Process, either in this world or, as this Process flows onward through Our Lord's Resurrection and Ascension, in the Eternal World to come.

XII

THE CHURCH AND THE MINISTRY

AT ANY one moment of time or within any particular frontier of her historical development, the visible Catholic Church is knit together and made one as the Body of Christ, primarily within the Sacramental unity of the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar and by her reception of the Holy Communion, which, after that Sacrifice, is ever rebestowed upon her. As the offered bread and wine are gathered in from the created universe and lifted up upon the Altars of the Church, and as the Faithful receive the Body and Blood of the Undivided Christ into their individual persons, they are perfected organically together as one body in a Church which today is spread in space throughout the whole wide world.

The Mass is also the Sacrament of Unity with the Saints who abide in the Presence of God and with all the Faithful Departed of the Church Expectant, since these too rest in Christ; and all who are united to Him who is Lord both of the living and of the dead, are, by that fact, united mutually to one another in a single living whole. Therefore, considered in this aspect of what is called the Communion of Saints,¹ the Mass is the Sacrament of the organic oneness of the Church, not only in space, but also in the time gone by of all the Church's history. For when we are united in that Sacrament with the Holy Dead, we are in fact united with all those of the Faithful who have preceded us in the visible Church at various periods throughout all the two thousand years since Our Lord's own earthly life.

However, this kind of contemporaneous oneness on the part of the present Church with her historic past, is achieved in the Mass through an immediate Sacramental relationship of the Church in time with a history which has, as it were, been al-

¹ The Apostles' Creed. The word "Saints" has reference to all faithful baptised Christians, both living and dead. Cf. St. Paul's use of the word in his Epistles, where it is repeatedly applied to the living.

ready received out of time into eternity. In addition to this, there exists another especially provided Sacrament whereby the living inner continuity of the visible Church is outwardly mediated and thus made clear and secure beyond all manner of doubt within the historical time process here upon this earth. This is the Sacrament of Holy Order. It is this Sacrament which imparts to the Sacred Ministry of the Church that organic continuity which is the peculiar property of the whole Incarnation Process and through which, therefore, that continuity is particularized in an unbroken succession of sacramentally separated individuals.

In any discussion of the Sacrament of Holy Order, it is important to keep in mind the fact just mentioned that the organic integrity of the Church in time, in common with her living oneness at any particular moment of her history, is indeed, ultimately, a property of the Incarnation Process as a whole. This evident truth follows necessarily from the fact that the Process, stemming as it does historically from the perfected humanity of Our Lord, is, within our creation, a spreading extension of His human nature. The latter's perfectly maintained oneness is clearly a property of that nature in its entirety. The secret of its indestructible unity is not to be ascribed to, and cannot be found resident within, any one of its elements or parts considered separately. It is nevertheless also true that within Our Lord's Person, even while viewing Him as a single individual, we may readily discern, through a rational analysis, various active functions which can be separated in thought at least, the one from the other. It follows from this that within the body of His humanity, as this spreads outward in the world from His individual Person to take many millions of additional human beings into its own single new perfection, some of the functions of that body—while themselves still remaining inseparable from its organic unity as a whole—may nevertheless be delegated in a special manner to certain relatively few individuals chosen from among the very many men and women who make up the entire Church, the multitudinous visible extension of the Incarnation. Indeed, for the welfare and proper functioning of the Church as soon as she spreads outward and

beyond the individual Person of Our Lord Himself, it is necessary that certain specific functions of the Incarnate Life-Process be thus delegated to a limited number of representative individuals. It is upon this latter fact that there rests the Catholic Sacramental Ministry.

The functions of the Incarnation Process which are thus exclusively delegated to chosen Sacramental Ministers are, primarily, the Sacerdotal or Priestly functions of Our Lord. This statement must be followed at once by the statement of another truth which should be held constantly in mind by Catholics. The Church has but one High Priest, who is Our Lord Himself. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews insists emphatically upon this fact. "They truly were many priests," he writes, referring to the priests of the Old Covenant and of the sacrificial worship of the Temple at Jerusalem,² "many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this Man,"—referring to Our Lord Himself—"because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable Priesthood, wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." He it is "who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself. Even Jesus Christ Our Lord." The Ministry of the Church, therefore, derives its Sacerdotal character from the one eternal Priesthood of Our Lord.

The specifically Priestly function of Our Lord's activity is found in His ever-continuing mediation of the perfected content of His human nature into His Divine Nature, in His taking of a contingent, limited and mortal perfection into a Perfection which is absolute, potentially all-embracing and eternal. This particular phase of Our Lord's work, which clearly is possible only to One who includes a human nature and a Divine Nature perfectly united within a single Person, we have already discussed at length. We have seen that this Priestly work of the mediation of a newly created natural order into the Divine Being was something which went on at every

² Hebrews 7:23ff.

moment throughout Our Lord's earthly life. It culminated in that consummating Act of Mediation on the Cross, through which, after the Ascension, the whole sum of His earthly accomplishment was finally carried by Him out of created nature into His transcendent Godhead.

On the Cross Our Lord was Himself both Priest and Victim. That is, as Victim He provided in Himself the necessary offering for His Sacrifice, taken from His natural world; and as Priest He carried this offering beyond the Cross into the eternal level of His Divine Nature, as He withdrew as a human individual from the natural world. In this historical sense, Our Lord's Sacrifice and His Priestly Act within that Sacrifice were accomplished and fulfilled once and for all. As the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, just quoted, teaches us, these things need not daily be repeated. But as we have now seen in connection with the Sacrament of the Mass, while the Sacrifice of the Cross may not be repeated, it is, nevertheless, an eternal as well as an historical fact, precisely because Our Lord was both human and Divine. He was, as St. Thomas Aquinas so profoundly and superbly puts it: "*Verbum supernum prodiens, Nec Patris linquens dexteram.*"³ Within that eternity which in His Divine Nature He never forsook, His every historic action had its eternal term. And it is this eternal term of His Sacrifice on the Cross which makes the latter sacramentally accessible to us within the Church, to all succeeding history. Our Lord's Priestly Action within His Sacrifice is eternal in precisely the same way that His whole accomplishment is eternal; and, just as His Life and Sacrifice as a whole emerge into our history in every Mass, so His eternal Priesthood is unveiled and made accessible to the Church as she, continuing His human life within the world, confers the Sacrament of Holy Order upon her chosen ministers.

It is maintained within the earliest traditions of the Church, as it is clear from the New Testament records, that Our Lord did choose certain men to be the Officers, as it were, of that Kingdom which He was in process of founding. Before His As-

³ "The Word proceeding from above, yet leaving not the Father's side." Office Hymn for Corpus Christi at Lauds.

cension He gave to these men, as the Gospel records also tell us, particular and specific authority for works as leaders in His new Society. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations,"⁴ He told them; and He added to that command the distinctively Priestly authority and power to forgive and to retain sin, the power of judging men within the Church, which was and still is a power which only the Divine Logos possesses. For it is only the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity who has the power of reperfecting a disorder which has become humanly inaccessible within the time process, and this as we shall presently see, is precisely the power which must be invoked in the forgiveness of sin. And it is He alone who can share this power with those with whom He chooses to share it. "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them," He told His disciples, "and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."⁵

Thus Our Lord, as He began to share His entire life with the life of the Church as a whole, began also to share by a specially delegated authority His particular and eternal Priesthood with a relatively few persons whom He chose and trained specifically for that Office. In this manner were the Apostles made Sacerdotal Ministers within the larger body of the Church which was now emerging in an organic social form. These twelve men became the first chosen representatives in history, within the family of the Church, of that eternal Priesthood of Our Lord by virtue of which He was, even in His earthly lifetime, beginning the offering of His own life to His Father. Thus, during His lifetime, Our Lord did not merely choose certain men and officially designate them to represent Him in His Priestly Office. *He was, instead, not so much engaged in the making of Priests as He was in the establishment of the eternal fact of His Priesthood.* An eternal Priesthood is established in His Person. Correspondingly, therefore, an individual priesthood is not so much bestowed at the Sacramental ordination of individual men as the Church's Ministers, but such men are rather received by the Sacrament of Holy Order into the

⁴ Matt. 28:19.

⁵ John 20:23.

eternal Priesthood of Our Lord, as this, together with the whole Process of His Incarnation, prolongs itself in history.

The Apostles seem so to have understood their Office. Immediately after the Ascension, they felt that their number, made less by one through the dereliction and suicide of Judas, should be made up again by the taking of another man into that number. Therefore Matthias, who was of course already a member of the Church, was chosen and ordained as a new twelfth disciple by those eleven first disciples who had in turn been taken into His Priesthood directly by Our Lord Himself, and had thus received the authorization to act in His Sacerdotal capacity within the Church in the world.⁶ The Catholic Priesthood has been replenished and enlarged by this process of successive ordination ever since the days of the Apostles.

At every ordination of a Priest of the Church, as in the case of every other Sacramental Act, that which is in time within Our Lord's human nature is merged with and taken into that which is eternal in His Divine Nature. Every newly ordained Priest receives the particular authority of his Office, together with an accompanying gift of the Holy Spirit and a direct commission, from other Ministers of the Church who themselves are links in a living chain extending backward in time to those men who were the first to be taken into His Priesthood while Our Lord was still alive on this earth. This continuity in time of the Priestly line, kept unbroken not only by prayer and spoken mandate from one generation to the next, but also by actual tactual succession, prolongs for His body in history that identical, perfect and unblemished continuity which was first present in the individual earthly life of Our Lord Himself from Bethlehem to Calvary, and which was therefore also a property of His individual Priesthood as one of the functions of that life. Such is the continuing "outward and visible sign" of the Sacrament of Holy Order. But since, just as in the case of Our Lord Himself, the Church now continues to mediate His extending human nature into His Divine Nature, so at every Sacramental Ordination, that Priesthood of Our Lord which is

⁶ Acts 1:21-26.

eternal and all-embracing emerges afresh into our world within the visible Church; and the human Priest is received into this Priesthood, to become a part of its continuing manifestation among men.

In this way does Our Lord's Priesthood proceed forth into the Catholic Church, while at the same time, His Eternal Priesthood must be thought of as unique and undivided, leaving not—to paraphrase St. Thomas—His own eternal Sacrificial Action. Hence we can see that the Priests of the Church are not new individual priests, new in the sense of possessing a newly created separate priesthood in their own right. Of this sort were the priests of the Old Testament, who, as we have already quoted from the Epistle to the Hebrews, were made “many in number, because that by death they were hindered from continuing.” These individual mortal priests were definitely superseded by Him who, because He abideth forever, hath His Priesthood unchangeable. It is rather that in the individual Priests of the Catholic Church there emerges in the hands, as it were, of her ordained officers, precisely that One Priesthood which *is* unchangeable and eternal. It is still true that the Priestly representatives in the visible Church, being human and mortal, must come and go; but the eternal Priesthood of Christ is made continuously visible in time within the Church's Priestly succession provided by her Sacrament of Holy Order.

That the Priesthood of the Church is indeed a particular function of the whole Life-Process of the Incarnation, but singled out to be entrusted sacramentally to chosen individuals, is shown by the significant fact that the Sacrament of Holy Order is invariably bestowed within the framework of that greater Sacrament, the Mass. Within the Mass we behold the Incarnation Process functioning in its entirety, as the bread and wine of the natural world are taken into the substance of Our Lord's perfected humanity and thence into the Substance of His Risen and Ascended Body and Blood. The natural bread and wine sum up the whole of life for those men and women of the Church who bring them forward for this use. If, at the same time, the Sacrament of Holy Order is to be administered, certain chosen men are also put forward by the laity to act as

representatives of that Sacerdotal function which, since she is the body of Our Lord within the world, resides in the whole Church. These men are then ordained with the laying on of hands by others who are already Sacerdotal Ministers. Then, while Our Lord takes the offered bread and wine of the world into Himself, at the same time in a special manner He receives those men who are put forward together with the bread and wine, to be ordained into His Eternal Priesthood. He thus sacramentally particularizes His function as Priest, out of the wholeness of His Action in the Mass. Such men, by this Act, then become the delegated vessels of His mediating power within the wholeness of His Church. By the same token, they, in their living succession, become the sacramentally particularized and visible bearers of the continuity of His Life within the historical process of the Church in time.

The Sacerdotal function of Our Lord, considered from the point of view of its residence within His whole and undivided body, the Church, in the same manner in which His Priesthood is a function of His Person as an integral whole, gives rise to what is sometimes called the "Universal Priesthood of the Laity." All Catholics are sharers in the Priestly function in this generalized sense. They are not, however, by virtue of this fact, *particularized* Priests. That is, they are not Sacramental Priests, because, unless they be ordained, they have not been taken sacramentally into Our Lord's eternal Priesthood. In a sense, to call laymen "Priests" would be to make a mistake analogous to that which would be made in calling bread and wine, perfected in the natural level within the Church, Our Lord's Body and Blood, before He has so received them on the Altar in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

On the other hand, if by some amazing coincidence every Catholic Bishop of the visible Church were to die within a short period of time, in such wise that the Sacramental Succession of the Ministry were actually interrupted in its historical expression, then, it may be supposed, the Priests and laity of the Church would have it within their power, under God, to restore that lost Sacramental Succession. Thus a new line of Sacramental Ministers, by Our Lord's ratification organically

continuous with the older and extinct line, might be started by virtue of that generalized continuity which does in fact reside in the Church as a whole. However, this question is so academic and unreal, because of the remoteness of the contingency upon which it is based, that this attempted answer to it scarcely throws much added light upon the nature of the Church's Sacramental Order.

On the other hand, it has happened at least once in the Church's history, and specifically in the history of the Finnish Church,⁷ that the Bishops of a whole country died all within so brief a period that none remained to be the bearer of the Church's continuity within a wide national area. This, it must be seen, is a very different sort of situation from that referred to in our former hypothetical case. In this historical case, while it might have proved inconvenient to restore the national Episcopate by calling upon other Catholic Bishops for assistance in the matter, it was nevertheless at least possible to go outside the country to get new Bishops consecrated. Actually this was not done. A certain representative clergyman of the local Church,⁸ not a Bishop, presumed to consecrate a new Bishop. Now it is not at all clear that that organic Sacramental continuity which, as we have noted, might be rediscovered in case of need in the Church as a whole, can in fact be so rediscovered within a relatively small fragment of the Church, apart from the Sacramental line of Apostolic Bishops particularly while it remains possible to obtain its visible Sacramental expression from some other part of the Church. The fact that the Finnish clergy did proceed to consecrate a Bishop as if, in some sense, they were themselves the constituted representatives of the whole Church, when actually this was by no means so, shows that we must entertain at the least a grave doubt concerning their understanding of the Sacrament of Holy Order. Therefore the so-called Orders of the Finnish Church must be rejected by the Catholic Church, until such time as this defect in Sacramental continuity can be remedied by the reconstitu-

⁷ In the year 1884.

⁸ In this case, "the senior theological professor" of the country. See the Bishop of Brechin's *Union of Christendom*. New York, 1938, p. 322.

tion of a Catholic Episcopate, provided, as this must now be, through Bishops of the Church outside Finland itself.⁹

The historically continuous Ministry of the Catholic Church is often referred to as the Ministry of the Apostolic Succession. This expression emphasizes the fact to which reference has just been made, namely that the first Ministers of the Church were the Apostles themselves. Exercising the authority directly committed to them by Our Lord, the Apostles subsequently chose and ordained other men, who succeeded them in their Office in the Church. These newly chosen and ordained men, continuing that which had been begun in them, ordained others in their turn as these were found necessary for the Church's expanding life. Those Ministers who are thus ordained in this Succession are the so-called "valid" Ministers of the Church.

All these statements concerning the Apostolic Succession are, as we have now seen, perfectly true. However, put in this rather bald manner, as they unfortunately often are, and without further explanation of the Sacramental quality of the Priesthood, they seem to lay a chief stress upon the development of the Church as an historical human institution. The Ministry is made to seem like an officially transmitted governing class. Since ordination always takes place with what is called the "laying on of hands," insistence on the Apostolic Succession is sometimes falsely made to appear as a mere insistence upon a physical tactual succession in the Officers of the Church. If this were the chief necessity, it would appear to give to the Ministry an element which might be construed as akin to magic, a kind of personal *mana* transmitted from one generation to the next.

An understanding of the Sacramental nature of Holy Order, which relates the Catholic Priesthood to Our Lord's Eternal Priesthood, will enable us to avoid the latter errors. Unfortunately, in eirenic statements of the Church's doctrine in this matter, especially when such statements look towards some kind of approach to Protestant societies which, on their part, definitely reject the Catholic Sacramental theory in its entirety, it

⁹ Since 1934, Catholic Order has been in process of restoration in the Finnish Church, from the Swedish succession.

is sometimes suggested that a united Church might retain the "Historic Episcopate," while refraining from any doctrinal interpretation of that venerable institution. This approach to the problem of Christian unity¹⁰ shows at best a certain ignorance of the nature of the Church and her Ministry, and a consequent confusion of thought. At its worst, it appears as a dishonest attempt to hoodwink Protestants into accepting a Sacramental Ministry which, if it were clearly and honestly set forth, they would most certainly reject. Apart from its Priestly character and its Sacramental continuity it is quite impossible to present any cogent intellectual grounds for insisting upon the "Historic Episcopate." Certainly, the mere fact that this is an ancient and sentimentally venerable institution is no adequate reason for retaining it, if this retention does actually block the path to Christian unity. Furthermore, no Episcopally governed Church can with reason insist intransigently on a system of government by Bishops, if mere institutional governors is all that Catholic Bishops are. As a matter of fact, there have been periods and places in the Catholic Church's own history when her institutional governors and administrators were not the Bishops, but the Abbots of the great monasteries.¹¹ Under such systems the Bishops have had practically no administrative authority whatever. But this state of affairs is quite reconcilable with a Sacramental view of the Bishop's function in the Church, and with the necessity of retaining that Ministry.

¹⁰ It is admissible to speak of *re-union* only as between bodies which at some time in their history have been actually united. For example, Rome and Constantinople or Rome and Canterbury might be reunited, because they were in full communion with one another for many centuries. Constantinople broke at one time from both Rome and Canterbury, while the latter two continued together in communion for nearly three centuries longer. On the other hand, no Protestant society has ever been, *as a society*, in communion with the Catholic Church. Protestant bodies result from the voluntary association together of individual Christians who have already withdrawn themselves from the Catholic Communion. Obviously, the problem of unity, as between for example, the Anglican Church or any of its branches, with any Protestant society, is not one of *re-union* between two continuously unbroken Sacramental Communion, but rather the problem of the discovering of terms upon which non-Sacramental Christians may be brought into the full Sacramental Catholic fellowship. At its foundation, the latter problem seems not so much to be one of arranging the terms of unity for Protestant societies with the Catholic Church, as it does to be a problem of converting large numbers of Protestants to Catholicism.

¹¹ *E.g.*, in fifth and sixth century Ireland.

It is sometimes urged, under the form of a rather dull Latin pun, that Bishops are only of the "*bene esse*" and not of the "*Esse*" of the Church. If this is true, it is difficult to understand how people who believe it have the complacency, not to say arrogance, to force their opinions of what is good for the Church, but not essential, upon Protestants who cannot agree with them, as a *sine qua non* of Christian unity. Bishops who are merely of the "*bene esse*" of the Church might well be dispensed with. But, oddly enough, it so happens that many an obscure Parish Priest might be found who, having suffered under the arbitrary and autocratic administrative rule of a humanly disagreeable Bishop, might cheerfully grant that, according to his personal experience, Bishops seem far from being of the "*bene esse*" of the Church. However, that same Priest is bound to maintain that the Bishops are assuredly of the "*Esse*" of the Church. Whether, under certain immediate circumstances, they sometimes seem to be far from her "*bene esse*," makes no difference at all to the principle involved. For without the presence of sacramentally ordained Bishops, there can normally be no Catholic Church whatever. For this reason, while it might be suggested that Bishops should be shorn of their administrative powers, it can never be suggested that the Church be deprived of that Sacramental Priesthood of which the Bishops, by virtue of their Sacred Office, are the Sacramental bearers in a continuous Apostolic line.

An additional word must here be said concerning the so-called "validity" of ordination, and the Ministry of Protestant Churches. The word "validity" in this connection is apt to arouse a certain emotional and prejudiced response, and we Catholics must be careful to define the sense in which we ourselves use it. We must not say in a glib and superficial way that historical Orders received through Bishops in the Apostolic Succession are "valid" and those not so received, are not. Whether or not Orders are valid, depends upon the answer to a further question: "Valid for what?" Protestant Ministers receive an ordination which is certainly valid for the purposes they serve. From the Catholic point of view they partake of that wider defect which limits the scope of the Protestant

Church as a whole. Catholics will always maintain that the Church is the visible and objective expression of that new and re-created Divine social order which the Incarnation of the Logos brought again into the disordered and fallen world. Furthermore, just as this new order could not be achieved by man, but had to be bestowed, in embryo at least, by God Himself, so also the Divinely constituted visible Church in which the Incarnation extends itself can never be achieved apart from an organically continuous and therefore Sacramental union with the Founder Himself. Protestants would seem to imply that a "Church" can take form at any time and place that a fresh group of people come together in the Name of Our Lord and ask Him, without reference to historical and Sacramental continuity, to bless their endeavor. We must not by any means condemn such endeavors out of hand, and we have to acknowledge that such new religious societies have been used by God to bring forth many good fruits of the Holy Spirit in the world. We can assert, however, without fear of contradiction, that these societies, however blessed and used by God, are obviously not part of that Sacramental Church which we believe mediates and sets forth Our Lord's eternalized Life and Sacrifice visibly within the time continuum. They are not part of the Church which we call Apostolic and Catholic. Protestants themselves will not claim to be a part of this Church, because, by and large, they have ceased to believe in it in the sense in which it is here expounded.

In passing, notice should be taken in this connection, of present-day efforts in certain parts of the Anglican Communion¹² looking toward union with Presbyterian bodies. It happens that Presbyterians, especially those of their traditional and orthodox adherence, do claim in some sense to have a ministry which is historically continuous with that of the Catholic Church. They claim, however, that not the Bishops alone, but rather all the ordained ministers of the Church are the organs or instruments of this continuity. This would mean that the Presbyters of the Church, which is the Greek word for her Priests, have the authority and power to ordain new Presbyters

¹² *E.g.*, in England and the United States.

in each succeeding generation. The Catholic Church has always maintained that the Bishops alone of all her ministers have reserved to themselves this power of ordination, and that the Priests or Presbyters have no such authority because it has never been delegated to them by the Bishops.

It would seem as if, with the aid of competent historical and theological research, this difference of opinion between Catholics and Presbyterians as to whether Bishops alone or Priests alone or both together have the power of ordination, might some day be settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. It might then be decided whether, in the Catholic view, Presbyterian ministers who have not been ordained by a Catholic Bishop, do in fact need to be so ordained before they can function as Catholic Priests.¹³ However, there is an important prior question in this case, which conferences on Presbyterian and Catholic unity all too often disregard. The first question actually should be not whether Presbyterian ministers may have received a "valid" ordination from other Presbyters instead of Bishops, but rather, whether they believe that their ministry is sacramentally Sacerdotal, and whether by their ordination they have been received, after the manner we have been discussing, into the Eternal Priesthood of Our Lord, in such wise that they are now commissioned to administer the Catholic sacraments and, in particular, to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. If *that* is what Presbyterian ministers believe concerning their own official functions in the Church, then it should be a relatively easy matter to decide whether this Sacramental Ministry, in any particular case, has or has not been "validly" bestowed.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that scarcely any Presbyterian ministers do believe these things concerning their own ministry. Nevertheless, any attempt at re-union between Presbyterians and Anglicans which does not face this prior dogmatic issue, is doomed to a deliberate vagueness, very likely to suspicions of dishonesty which may be entertained on both sides, and to eventual frustration. Unfortunately, all negotiations up to the present have seemed to try to avoid this very

¹³ If it were decided that they did require Episcopal ordination, this would not be *re*-ordination, but simply ordination for the first time.

real dogmatic problem. The reports of negotiating committees have even seemed to put this problem almost impatiently aside. A question therefore must arise in some minds as to whether these particular approaches toward Christian unity actually have any deep religious foundation. Are the appointed conferences interesting themselves primarily in trying to knit up the wounds in the Sacramental Body of Our Incarnate Lord? Or are they rather motivated by an all too natural wish for a greater, but merely human solidarity? The Anglican and Presbyterian bodies are largely supported by our "best people," the members of our upper middle class. All such people feel themselves gravely threatened by the disconcerting proletarian movements in the world today. They thus tend instinctively to try to draw more closely together to withstand this darkening threat. They tend instinctively to close their ranks as much as possible in every field of interest and endeavor, in the fields of business, of intellectual and of religious life. Is it not possible, at least, that these present approaches to Church unity are not so much of religious as they are of social and economic significance? To some eyes at least, the conferring groups seem to be worried over present institutional divisions for reasons which are quite other than religious. It is not necessary to suppose that the people involved are actually conscious of this situation, or that they comprehend it fully with their rational minds. However, their class instinct for self-preservation would easily account for what seems a deliberate attempt to get rid of all doctrinal differences on a basis of overlooking them as if they were unimportant, in order to get on with the more serious social and economic business of uniting two great and wealthy middle class organizations in order that they may the more readily face the threatening economic revolutionary situation which almost certainly lies ahead. It is pertinent to ask why these approaches to unity are initiated with the Presbyterians. Is it perhaps because the Southern Baptists or the Colored Methodists are neither quite so rich nor quite so "nice"?

It should now be clear that it is quite impossible to consider any theory of the Church's ministry or any question of what is

called "validity" of ordination, apart from those deeper questions which concern the nature of the Church herself. The Catholic Sacerdotal Ministry stems from and continues within the Incarnation. On the other hand, it must in all charity be pointed out that the Protestant theory of the Church tends, from a Sacramental viewpoint, to make the Incarnation itself appear somewhat superfluous. If a group of good men and women can pray for God's direct blessing and so be constituted a Church, why was the Incarnation of Our Lord necessary, or what direct and necessary practical bearing has the Incarnation upon the present life of the Church? According to the Protestant conception, why cannot new Churches start afresh here and there, at this time or at that place? For such a purpose, why, at the most, would not a clear prophetic revelation of the Eternal Christ to man have sufficed in the beginning? Men and women of good will have always had and will always have a direct spiritual access to God. God, furthermore, will always have His outstanding Prophetic witnesses in the world, revealing progressively His Nature and His will to men. But groups of men and women clustered about a holy Prophet are very different things from the Church as a re-created social order, knit into a Sacramental unity about the Person of Our Incarnate Lord, the Body of God, growing organically to take the world back into itself. Protestants, from this point of view, although they act with the best possible will and intention, seem to be trying, as it were, to "short-circuit" the Incarnation, appealing for a charismatic sanction to their present endeavors while going over the head of Our Lord's own historical existence, forgetting or disregarding the time process, and attempting outside the Sacramental Church to achieve a corporate organic unity which only the Incarnation in Sacramental continuity can supply. Therefore neither the Protestant Church nor the Protestant Ministry have that objective, Sacramental essential being which we attribute to the Catholic Church. Catholics, for their part, believe in common with Protestants that they also have immediate access to God through Christ, both in their individual and in their corporate lives. But they further believe that His Eternal Life can be made manifest for

the organic re-creation and the social redemption of the world in time only through that Sacramental social body which not only reaches directly up to heaven where Our Eternal Lord sits enthroned, but also extends continuously back into history, where this same Lord appears at one time and place, a man among men, initiating the age-long process of His Incarnation here in earth. Thus, in the Catholic Church the circuit of the Divine Life, both in time and in eternity, is complete. It is logical that Protestant bodies, which themselves feel no essential need for an historical Sacramental continuity, should at the same time have no place for a sacramentally continuous Sacerdotal Ministry. On the other hand, with the continuity of the Apostolic Succession is to be identified the Sacramental continuity of the Catholic Church herself.

Following the arguments here advanced, it is not of paramount importance to insist—or to attempt to insist in the face of much complicated and sometimes conflicting or, at any rate, disputed historical evidence—that the threefold Ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons which compose the Sacramental Hierarchy of Holy Orders in the Church today, go back in unbroken succession to the time of Our Lord.¹⁴ It would seem that it would suffice to insist that it has ever been the intention of the Church to preserve an unbroken Sacramental continuity, embodied in a line of Sacerdotal Ministers, in order that this Succession might be the outward, visible and necessary sign within her life on earth of the Eternal Priesthood of Our Lord.

Of the fact of such an intention there can be no reasonable doubt. It is bound up with the very idea of the Sacramental Church and is therefore, for Catholics, *de fide*, of the Faith. It is, nevertheless, very likely that the Ministers of the early Succession were all of them what we should today call Bishops.¹⁵ There is considerable evidence for this. The earliest account

¹⁴ The Preface to the Ordinal in the Prayer Book, expressing the authoritative belief of the Anglican Communion throughout the world, has this to say: "It is evident to all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, Priests and Deacons." Unfortunately this is not evident to Protestant controversialists and apologists. The latter stand officially condemned by the Anglican Communion, at least, as not "diligent" in their scholarship.

¹⁵ Cf. Hall, *Theological Outlines*, Morehouse Publishing Co., 1933, p. 230.

that we have of the ordination of other orders of Ministers is that of the Acts of the Apostles, where we find the Apostles themselves appointing, not what we call Priests, but rather, Deacons, the present third and lowest order of our Ministry.¹⁶ To these Deacons were assigned administrative and practical duties, the "serving of tables," as we are told. Both Prophetic and Sacramental activities were still kept in the hands of the Apostles,¹⁷ or of other Bishops ordained by them. Since that time Deacons have never been given a share in the Sacerdotal Ministry.¹⁸

It is probable that in the early Church, when the Catholic communities and congregations were relatively small, all Sacramental Acts, especially the celebration of Mass, were performed by Bishops in some central church or room of a private house where the Faithful could conveniently come together. However, as the number of Christians increased it became necessary for the Bishop of a community to ordain other Ministers, for Sacramental as well as for administrative duties, for example, for the saying of Mass in many different quarters of a given city. For the Bishops, this involved the Sacramental sharing or transmitting of their Priestly Office. However, this seems to have been done with the express limitation that certain Sacramental Acts should still be reserved to the Episcopal Office. Priests were ordained for the purpose of the cure of souls in separate congregations, for the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar, for the giving of Absolution of Sins and for imparting the Church's Blessing, which is the Blessing of God through Our Lord Himself. The Bishops seem to have authorized their Priests to perform certain other Sacraments, in part only, as it were. For example, in the Apostolic Sacrament of Unction

¹⁶ Book of the Acts of the Apostles, 6:2-4.

¹⁷ The Apostles (Acts 5:4) retained for themselves the "Ministry of the Word." This must mean vastly more than what a modern preacher would probably mean by that expression. The "Word" in this case is identical with the Logos of St. John's Gospel (the Greek uses no capital letter in either case), and the Ministry of the Word is, within the Church, primarily the ministration of the Sacraments through which the Divine Logos, the Eternal Son of God, continues His Incarnation in the world. Conceivably, the Ministry of the Word, in this connection, might have no reference whatever to preaching.

¹⁸ As a matter of fact, neither are Deacons permitted to preach sermons of their own making.

or of anointing of the sick with oil to their spiritual and physical healing, the actual Unction may be performed by a Priest, but the oil used in this Sacrament must first have been prepared, blessed and sent to his Priest by the Bishop. Thus, while all Bishops have been Priests from the beginning, not all Priests, by any means, have been or are Bishops. The Priests of the Church are Priests to the extent of having received a partial delegation of Sacramental function from the Bishops, a share in Sacramental work. Above all, the Sacrament of Holy Order has never been even in part delegated to Priests. The Sacrament of our historical continuity as a Church has ever remained within the hands of the Bishops, and this is what we mean by Apostolic Succession. It is a fact to which we give our assent every time we repeat the Creeds: "I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church."

It will be interesting to notice here that there are two Catholic Sacraments which do not require the ministry of a Priest, because the reason for this further illuminates the nature of the Sacerdotal function. As we have seen, Our Lord was acting as a Priest when He was receiving the substance of the perfected pattern of His human nature, whose content was drawn out of the disordered materials of the natural world, into the Substance of His Divine Nature. Ultimately, this Priestly Action was consummated as He withdrew Himself in His Wholeness out of the world of nature into the world of super-nature, out of time into the Eternity of His Godhead. Continuing this same kind of action in the social body of His expanding humanity, the Priests of the Church exercise that same Sacerdotal function which derives from Our Lord, or better, which *is* Our Lord's continuing Sacerdotal function expressed again and again in successive Sacramental acts. It is a Sacerdotal action whenever any value or values perfected into the Church out of the materials of the environmental world, are mediated out of that contingency which any and all perfection necessarily has within our time and space, into the Absolute Perfection of Our Lord's Risen Body. It is also a complementary part of the Sacerdotal function whenever that Absolute Perfection which belongs to Our Risen Lord is, in turn, mediated into our time

and space, as happens, for example, in the Sacrament of Penance. In this latter Sacrament are healed or set right those imperfections in the Church's offerings of bread and wine which, unfortunately, are found in all offerings that have depended upon a human cooperation in their preparation. These imperfections within the natural level must themselves be rectified as a prior condition of their acceptance by Our Lord into His level of super-nature, and Our Lord implements His necessary atoning Action through His Priests on every occasion of this kind. In other words, a Priest is required in every Sacramental rite in which time is to be mediated into eternity and eternity into time.

The two Sacraments which do not require the Sacerdotal mediation, Holy Baptism and Holy Matrimony, are Sacraments whose processes are chiefly fulfilled within the level of this world. They therefore move within the time process alone. Baptism, as we have seen, effects the transfer of the person baptised out of the environment of our disordered creation, the environment of "Original Sin," into the new social environment which the Incarnation supplies here on earth. This change of status must be effected in the case of every individual before the Incarnation Process can be further continued in respect to him. This is the step which must be taken before any contributions or values taken from life can be lifted above the level of nature. Therefore this initial step of Baptism consists in a process which still remains within the world of time, bridging as it does that gulf between the fallen world and that portion of the Kingdom of God which is still rooted within our natural creation. Hence, for this kind of initial transfer into the Church, no Sacerdotal mediation, as this has just been defined, is required. It is for this reason that in great need or emergency a hospital nurse may baptise an infant if it seems at the point of death. Such a Baptism is a valid Sacrament, in that it does actually incorporate the child into the visible portion of the Body of Christ.

Holy Matrimony is a Sacrament which is so clearly concerned with the order of the Church upon the level of natural creation, that it hardly needs further comment to see why a Priest is not

necessarily required for its ministration.¹⁹ If, however, that Sacrament is itself performed, as by rights it should be, within the framework of the Mass, a Priest is, of course, necessary for the offering of the marriage at the Holy Sacrifice. In this case, however, the two contracting parties, as they marry *one another*, are really engaged in the preparation of a very special, indeed a unique kind of content of that bread and wine which the Priest is about to place upon the Altar at the following Offertory. However, it seems clear that the laity alone, by God's grace, suffice for the *preparation* of this offering which is precisely their marriage. The laity prepare this bread and wine within the Church, but still on the level of nature. A Priest is required only when the offerings are received by Our Lord beyond the level of nature, into His Bread and Wine, His Body and His Blood, out of humanity into His Divinity. Herein lies the reason why the minister of a marriage is not the Priest. When we come to the discussion of this Sacrament, we shall see that the ministers of a marriage are actually the two contracting parties themselves.

The Catholic Sacerdotal Ministry, then, in its visible Sacramental continuity from the human lifetime of the Incarnate Logos down to the present moment and throughout all the future ages of world history, is, as it were, the very backbone of the continuing social Organism of the Incarnation. Without this Ministry there can be no Mass, and, in the Catholic sense, no Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. Without the Catholic Ministry, men have no guarantee of organic continuity in their Church, or of integrity of Christian doctrine and witness, or of the completeness of the Catholic life. Since the Church has always believed that the fullness of her Ministry is vested only in the Bishops and only in part functionally shared by them with those lesser Sacramental Ministers who are now called Priests, the Catholic Episcopate in its Apostolic Succession is of a unique and vital necessity in the Church. Bishops are not necessarily needed as governors or as institu-

¹⁹ Our Lord Himself has told us that after the Resurrection, that is, at the end of the history of our world of time and space, "they neither marry nor are given in marriage." (Mark 12:25)

tional officers in any particular constitution of the visible Church, although they do tend to take their places naturally in a governmental as well as in the Sacramental hierarchy. But as Sacramental Ministers of the Church's organic continuity, their presence or absence are matters of life and death to the Church herself. "Ubi Episcopus, ibi Ecclesia." It is no exaggeration to put it thus: "Where the Bishop is, there is the Catholic Church."²⁰

²⁰The phrase is that of Ignatius of Antioch, c. 107 A.D. It occurs in the *Epistula ad Smyrnaeos*, 8.

XIII

THE SACRAMENTS OF CONFIRMATION AND PENANCE

AFTER Baptism and the Holy Communion, the Sacraments which should be participated in by the largest number of Catholics are doubtless those of Confirmation and of Penance.

Confirmation is a Sacrament which is closely related to Baptism. In fact, it is a kind of completion or crowning of the latter, although, of course, Baptism also is a complete Sacrament in itself, and is effectual without Confirmation in that it incorporates the person baptised into the social body of the Incarnation. There can be no doubt that the Holy Spirit of God moves and works His grace within both Sacraments. It is sometimes suggested that in Baptism God bestows His Spirit for "beginning" the Christian life, and that in Confirmation He does so for "strengthening and continuing" that life. It were probably unwise to attempt a too exact analysis of such a matter, lest we run the risk of trying to force God's Sacramental grace into merely human categories. The fact remains, however, that Confirmation has always been considered by the Church as closely related to Baptism; and in the Church's liturgical practice, the rite of administration of the Sacrament of Baptism is always made to look forward with allusion to Confirmation as something which, in every normal case, should be expected to follow either immediately or in the course of time.¹ The close connection of these two Sacraments seems to be emphasized by the fact that in the English Liturgies there is no Blessing directed to be given at the close of the Baptismal Office. The Blessing is placed

¹ In this connection, see the admonition to parents and Godparents at the end of the English Rite: "Ye are to take care that this child be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him." The American Prayer Book asks, in its Baptismal Rite, that Godparents shall promise to "take heed that this child, so soon as sufficiently instructed, be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him." It also directs that every person who is baptised as an adult "should be confirmed by the Bishop, so soon after his Baptism as conveniently may be."

at the end of the Confirmation Office when it is pronounced by the Bishop, as if Confirmation duly concluded that which in Baptism is in some sense but begun.

Confirmation might be thought of as corresponding, in the world of the Catholic Church, to what is called "coming of age," or coming to man's estate, in the natural human world. When we were but infants in our New World of the Incarnation—whether old in actual years or not is of minor importance—our parents in the household of the Faith, our Godparents, as we have already seen,² undertook to mediate this world to us during the years of our own incompetence. When, however, we are come to what the Prayer Book calls a "competent age,"³ it may be presumed that we are then able intelligently to take upon ourselves and in our own right all the responsibilities, duties and privileges of our lives as Catholics. This readiness by God's grace to take our own spiritual lives entirely on our own shoulders, as it were, is marked by the Sacrament of Confirmation. We kneel before a Bishop of the Church, who, as an Apostolic Minister, lays his hands upon our heads.⁴ As he does this, following the recorded examples of the Apostles themselves,⁵ he makes a brief prayer that we may be given the Holy Spirit, a special gift of His strengthening grace which, if our own wills be properly disposed and rightly intentioned, will bestow upon us sufficient power to complete the task which we are now wittingly undertaking.⁶

² Chap. X, pp. 283-284.

³ Rubric at the end of the Catechism.

⁴ In certain parts of the Church, the head of the person confirmed is also anointed with oil which has been previously blessed for this purpose by the Bishop. In the Eastern Church as well as, by special arrangement, in the Latin Communion, Confirmation may thus be administered by a Priest using this oil, the Bishop himself being absent. This is another example of a partial delegation of a sacramental function made by the Bishop to a Priest. In this connection, see above, Chap. XII, pp. 330-331.

⁵ *E.g.*, Acts 8:14-17; 19:5-6.

⁶ In the primitive Church, those who received the Sacrament of Baptism were chiefly converted adults. Therefore, after Baptism, Confirmation came to be immediately administered. This custom has been retained in the Eastern Church and in certain parts of the Latin Communion, although Baptism of infants is now the rule. The Confirmation of infants at the time of their Baptism would seem to lay a particular stress upon the grace of Confirmation as rounding out that of Baptism. In any event, the intelligent and volitional cooperation of the persons confirmed is not here required at the time of the reception of the Sacra-

It should be emphasized that Confirmation is by no means synonymous with what is called "joining the Church." As a matter of fact, the latter expression is always somewhat misleading from a Catholic point of view. Catholics never "join" the Church, if this word implies only a movement of an individual, of his own accord, toward and into the Society of the Church. Catholics are incorporated into that Society, that world of the Incarnation, they are "grafted into the body of Christ's Church"⁷ when they are baptised. And if we now apprehend the full significance of Holy Baptism, we should no more refer to this as "joining the Church" than we should refer to the natural birth of an infant as a process of "joining the world." It is, nevertheless, a very usual custom, especially in the Anglican Communion, to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to mature young people shortly before they are to receive their First Communions.⁸ Confirmation, however, is not to be thought of as an absolute prerequisite for this. According to both Latin and Anglican disciplines, it is sufficient in order to receive the Holy Communion, that a person shall be baptised, that he shall be instructed in the Faith, that he intend, by God's grace, to live up to his vocation in the Catholic Church, and that he expect to be, indeed that he be "ready and desirous to be,"⁹ confirmed.

From this it should be clear that baptised Protestants¹⁰ who refuse to be confirmed are excluded from the Catholic Sacrament of the Altar, not so much because they are actually unconfirmed, but because their avowed position is the very opposite of being "ready and desirous to be confirmed." All baptised Christians are, of course, members of the Catholic Church in a technical sense. However, if on coming to mature judgment, they

ment. The Anglican Communion stresses precisely this intelligent cooperation on the part of her Confirmation candidates.

⁷ Prayer Book Baptismal Office.

⁸ The Eastern Church, after confirming baptised infants, also proceeds at once to administer the Holy Communion. Neither the Latin nor the Anglican Communion administers the latter Sacrament to infants.

⁹ Rubric at the end of the Prayer Book Confirmation Office.

¹⁰ In many cases there is a legitimate doubt whether Protestants have received Catholic Baptism. Protestant Baptism may be defective, either in intention, lack of proper matter, or of form in the performance of the rite.

reject both the fundamental doctrines and the discipline of the Church, by that fact they also reject their own supernatural birthrights. By taking up such a position, either through ignorance or, perhaps, through contumacy, they separate themselves, as long as they hold to it, from the Catholic body. In such cases, the Church in her deep wisdom warns them away from the Holy Communion, until they may come to a better mind. They are thus warned for the sake of their own spiritual health. To draw near to very Truth while holding to a denial of It,¹¹ is, in the view of the Church, an extremely hazardous thing to do; for, as St. Paul writes, he that discerneth not the Lord's Body here eateth damnation to himself.¹²

The whole emphasis of the Sacrament of Confirmation, the emphasis which gives to this Sacrament a peculiar joy which is quite its own, is, as has been said, that of youth coming of age within the Church. The Sacrament is normally conferred upon individuals who have come together in considerable numbers to receive it in the Parish Church and in the presence of the congregation. Young men and women come forward corporately, not only with willing hearts but with knowing minds, in order to reappropriate to themselves, consciously and intelligently, the Catholic birthright which has been theirs since their Baptisms. They affirm this renewed intention standing together, responding corporately to the questions which the Bishop then puts to them: "Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that ye made,

¹¹ This is a different thing from merely having a deficient intellectual understanding of the truth. It is, instead, to claim to understand and still to deny. Our Lord once said to certain interlocutors: "If ye were blind ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." (John 9:41)

¹² I Cor. 11:29. The question must arise whether many professing Catholics are not in a like or even worse danger. It is an alarming fact that many a member of the Anglican Communion could be found to deny much of the Catholic teaching here set forth, or, if not to deny it, at least to relegate Catholic truth to the limbo of individual opinion, thereby making truth a subjective matter. Many other Catholics, while making no explicit denials, remain apathetic to the deep realities of their religion and of the Church's Sacramental practice. They seem to make no efforts either to understand or to apply them. It may be feared that all such members of the Church are in grave danger when they draw near to her Altars. Lapsed, partly lapsed or contumacious Catholics are surely in a more dangerous position than are pagans or Protestants, who may well have had little or no opportunity to know anything about the Catholic Faith.

or that was made in your name, at your Baptism; ratifying and confirming the same; and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which ye then undertook, or your Sponsors then undertook for you?" To this, everyone who is to be confirmed responds audibly: "I do."

Thus, a new generation of young men and women are welcomed by their elders in the Faith into the company of mature, intelligently participating members of the Society of the Incarnation. They take their disciplined places, with the fresh strength and eagerness of enthusiastic youth, by the side of the older generation, among the defenders of Our Lord Incarnate. They become the freely enlisted soldiers of the Army of the Cross, new units in the Bodyguard of God, as His Incarnation spreads further in the world and down the ages. Through the laying on of hands of the Bishop they then receive the grace of God and His Holy Spirit for this renewed determination. And the congregation welcomes them corporately within the Family of the Church, as adult citizens in the extending social organism of the Kingdom of God.

The primary task of a Catholic Christian in this world is, under God, that of building and maintaining, while he works together with his fellow Catholics, a social perfection which shall be the visible expression of Our Lord's Kingdom, as this takes form within His creation. It is against the background of such a corporate activity that individual perfections and individual pieties assume their proper relationships to Our Lord's social humanity in its wholeness. It is within the pattern of the corporate and redeemed values of the Incarnation Process that individual values assume their own just proportions and find their own harmonious places. The Sacrament of Baptism marks the beginning of this task. The Sacrament of Confirmation marks its intelligent and determined prosecution in Christian living.

On the other hand, as we have sufficiently pointed out, no Sacrament overrules the human will. Sacraments convey a sufficient grace for the right direction of the will. They never forcibly prevent its subsequent perversion. If this were true, the Sacraments would indeed lapse into that realm of magic

whither ignorant enemies of Christianity sometimes attempt to relegate them. The Sacrament of Baptism, for example, does in fact give a complete remission of all sin to the person baptised. That is, it does remove him from the environment of a disordered world, from an environment which is called that of Original Sin, into the world of the newly forming Order of the Incarnation. Also, the Holy Spirit, working within this Sacrament, reorganizes and re-orders each individual psychological world, the world of individual emotions and impulses and instincts, in such wise that every baptised person becomes, as it were, a fitting foundation for the future building of the individual self as a perfected member of the corporate Body of Christ. This Baptismal regeneration, as it is called, thus effects both an interior and an environmental change. It effects a disentanglement from that hampering disorder which is both interior and exterior, individual and social, and which is the portion of every human being born into this fallen natural world. However, at Baptism we are given only what might be called a perfected start within a Divinely ordered world and an initial grace to go on with a life which extends forward into the future. The whole content of that life has still to be filled in. Initial materials are now supplied, but these are analogous, perhaps, to clean sheets of white vellum, together with pen and pencils, or brushes and colors, and an accompanying power to employ these materials correctly. The manuscripts of our developed lives have still to be carefully written and beautifully illuminated. The perfecting of this future work which is, at Baptism, freely reentrusted into our hands, depends, under God, upon our own rational attention and efforts. At Baptism we become perfected spiritual infants. We are called to grow and to develop in the future into mature Saints within the world of the Church. This future growth and development is, however, something the direction and shaping of which is still left to us as free rational human beings, cooperating with the grace of God. Baptism relieves us of the handicaps and disastrous results of other people's wrong-headedness, both past and present. It does not by any means constrain us by force from being wilfully wrong-headed ourselves. It does not prevent us,

even with the added grace of Confirmation, from damaging that perfection, both immediate and potential, which God has bestowed. It does not prevent us from separating ourselves again from Him by voluntary free acts. After Baptism we are still free beings. Indeed, in a way, we are freer than before Baptism, for we are to a great extent extricated from the evilly determined processes of a fallen world.

It follows, therefore, that after Baptism we can still sin. We can, if we so will, again introduce disorder into the Divine Order which has been given us. Hence, post-baptismal sin, as it is called, has a particularly grievous quality about it. In such sin, we defy that true freedom which God has given to us in His Kingdom, and we mar the perfection of His body the Church. We thus injure not only our own individual relationships with God and so weaken the interior grace which we have received, but we also, in this case, injure all those mutual relationships with God which, in a corporate life, we are attempting to maintain together with our brothers in the Faith. It is for this reason that Our Lord once warned His followers that "he that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."¹³

It is interesting to note in this connection another attitude which Our Lord once took toward a certain man who was reported by the disciples to be casting out devils in His name. He replied to the disciples' objections¹⁴ that they were not to forbid this activity on the man's part because, as He said, "he that is not against us is on our side." It is to be remarked in this case that the disciples' objections to the work of the man in question, and to his use of Our Lord's name in his healing mission, were based on the fact that this particular healer seemed to refuse to follow Our Lord and to identify himself completely as one of the group of the disciples. Now it may indeed be said of the action or actions of any persons who, for one reason or another, remain outside the Brotherhood of the Incarnation, that they are "on the side of" Our Lord, provided these actions are of such a nature that they tend to be agreeable

¹³ Matt. 12:30.

¹⁴ Mark 9:38-40.

to the spread of the Incarnation Process in the world. Such actions tend, as it were, to improve the quality of that soil of the world within which the Vine of Our Lord's Incarnate Life is trying to grow and to flourish. By the same token, actions of the opposite kind on the part of persons outside the Incarnation are, of course, sinful; because no man, even apart from Our Lord's revelation, is ever quite without at least a certain natural knowledge of God's will, nor without a certain grace to fulfil it. Man, even within a fallen world, can both know and do that which would set forward Our Lord's redemptive work. If he deliberately fails to do this, acting contrary even to that good toward which the light of his natural intellect suffices to point him, he can most surely be said to sin. On the other hand, such people do not by their wrong actions introduce disorder into the Incarnation itself, because they themselves are not yet within it. Pagans and unbaptised persons may impede the spread of the Incarnation. They cannot, in the nature of the situation, *betray* it. Only baptised Christians can do this. It follows therefore that no one can sin in that thoroughgoing and terrifyingly evil way which, because of their high calling and their corporate obligations, is open to baptised Christians when they turn away from Our Lord. It is such who do indeed scatter, if they gather not. It is such who are against Our Lord when they are not with Him on every occasion of their lives. Post-baptismal sin partakes of the nature of the sin of Judas. It is a betrayal, even though it may not go to Judas's extreme lengths. It is in a very real sense to crucify the Son of God afresh, instead of guarding Him against the attacks of a chaotic and tumultuous world.

In the early Church, there was a school of thought which so realized the horror of reintroducing disorder into the Order of the Incarnation, that is, so realized the disastrous quality of post-baptismal sin, that it was felt that no one who had committed a grievous sin after his Baptism could possibly be forgiven. It was felt that for such a relapse into sin there could be no other recourse but to cast him out of the Brotherhood of the Church. On the other hand, the Catholic Church, while realiz-

ing the evil of post-baptismal sin, has never subscribed to the extreme views of these early perfectionists. The Church understands her own nature more clearly than did these people, admirable as we must admit they have to be regarded in their zeal for the spotless wholeness of the Church in the world. The Church knows, however, that certain disorders must almost inevitably appear actually to penetrate her body, if they are to be attacked and re-ordered into her living structure. Therefore, while the Church holds that complete remission of all the accumulated evil of life is given at Baptism, she refuses to teach that God's mercy and forgiveness must, by the same token, be forever after withdrawn in the face of subsequent human need. The Church believes in the forgiveness of sin.

How is this forgiveness of sin effected in the case of men and women who have been baptised and who are trying to live within the social organism of the Church? It is to this question that the Sacrament of Penance brings the complete reply. However, before considering the operation of this Sacrament and its implications in the Catholic life, it must be said that whenever any individual Catholic comes to realize that he has in some way damaged the integrity of his relationship with Our Lord or with any or all of his brothers in the Faith, he should as soon as may be make an act of private and individual penance. It may be said in passing that this does not necessarily mean that he is to try to summon up an emotional regret for his action.¹⁵ All true penance is forward looking. It resides largely in the will, which must be opened to God's grace for the future. For the individual, it consists in a determination to undo, in so far as this is possible, the wrong which has been done, even at the price of personal or material sacrifice, or of personal emotional discomfort. But chiefly it consists in a resolve, by the grace of God, not to repeat the sins in question. With such a renewed direction of the will, the penitent comes before God to ask Him in Our Lord's name, and through His atoning Sacrifice, to forgive and thus to put right that which is past and then to give grace for amendment in the future.

¹⁵ Emotional regret may be experienced apart from true penance. It is called remorse.

To such an act of penance and to such an individual request for forgiveness, quite apart from Sacramental Penance and Absolution received from a Priest, it is sound Catholic doctrine to believe that God's merciful response is swift. His forgiveness is sure and His grace for the future is at once freely bestowed. However, if we stop at this point, we have considered sin and its forgiveness only in its individual and personal aspects. We have not gone beyond the idea of sin as a private matter, something to be set right as though between an individual soul only and its God. On the other hand, every Catholic is very conscious of the fact that he does *not* lead a purely individual, a purely isolated, personal life, unto himself alone in the presence of God. On the contrary, it is hardly too much to say that a Catholic leads the most public life possible, because while he lives to his Lord he lives to Him in and through His Brotherhood. Thus it comes about that nothing which one Catholic does or thinks can remain a matter of indifference to other Catholics, because every individual accomplishment either sets forward or mars a common undertaking, the building up of the Kingdom of God.

All this means that if one Catholic obtains some positive success in any field of endeavor, this immediately reflects its values in the lives of all his brother Catholics; because within the Church, all her members are not only mystically, but very practically, one. It is thus that not only their joys, but also their sorrows and their trials, are common joys and common sorrows. It is not the individual who joys and sorrows alone, but the whole corporate Body of Christ.¹⁶ It follows also, therefore, that if any individual Catholic enters into an activity which is foreign to those values which can be assimilated into the Catholic Body, this too is of immediate concern to his brother Catholics. By his evil action, the individual in question is introducing disorder into the Order of the Incarnation, and this cannot be regarded by the other members with anything less than deep apprehension. This is, indeed, but another way of saying that, in the Catholic view, individual sin can no more be thought of

¹⁶ Cf. I Cor. 12:26-27. This truth is always present in the mind of St. Paul, and the analogy of the Church to a living body with its members knit together in a functional unity, occurs many times in his writings.

as a purely private matter than can individual good accomplishment.

It is for reasons such as these that the Church does not regard acts of private penance on the part of individual Catholics as being sufficient to cover the whole situation which acts of sin create. The sinner's brothers in the Faith still have a right, which is based on justice, to approach such a one and to say something like this: "You have sinned and, it may be as an individual, have been forgiven by God. But what of us? You have marred to some degree the perfection of our corporate enterprise." Therefore, the whole body of the Faithful may justly demand that individual Catholics shall go before an appointed officer of the whole Church, a Priest or a Bishop, and there, in the presence of a Sacramental representative of the entire Brotherhood, shall make particular confession of his sins to God. He will then receive an Absolution and a remission of his sins. This Absolution comes from God, but in this Sacramental Act, by Our Lord's provision¹⁷ it also comes through and from the whole company of the Faithful, within whose corporate body the Incarnate Christ still lives. In this Sacramental Action, not only is the individual's relationship with God reperfected, as an individual, but the corporate damage which he has caused is healed. The individual, by whose sin the corporate wholeness of the Church had been broken, is again knit up by the creative power, the grace of God, moving within the Sacrament of Penance, into a reestablished foundation for a future corporate perfection.

This is the fundamental reason for individual recourse to the Sacrament of Penance. Often there are other reasons urged. There is, within the confessional, the possibility of psychological release. There is the advantage of wise counsel from an impartial and experienced spiritual director. There is the comfort of sharing one's private difficulties with another person, under the complete and absolute seal of secrecy which the confessional assures. All these advantages may be present, but they are not the decisive arguments for the universal use of the Sacrament of Penance by Catholics. Such reasons by themselves

¹⁷ Recorded in the Gospel of St. John, 20:22-23.

might make the Sacrament seem merely advisable, rather than necessary to the life of the Church. The necessity for Sacramental Confession resides in the positive corporate contribution always inherent in it to the corporate perfection of Our Lord's Church.

Regarded in this light, Sacramental Confession, with its accompanying Absolution through the whole Church as this is mediated by one of her Priests, is no legalistic ceremony. Penance is not a matter of confessing guilt and then of accepting a relatively small punishment here and now, in order to escape a much more onerous punishment hereafter. On the contrary, it is one of the most constructive contributions which Catholics can make to their work of fulfilling the content of the Incarnation. In no other Sacrament do time and eternity, God and His Incarnate Life in the historical Church, more obviously interpenetrate. We Catholics, as we build our lives and, with our lives together build the Church, work with the materials of this world. We work with human and material relationships, with all the possible choices of action presented to us, with the ideas, the concepts, the intentions of each passing moment. Out of all these things, we seek to select and to arrange a structure of living values which we can bring to the Altar with some hope of acceptance and offer up to God. We carry within our own persons, in our characters, in our very beings, at each particular present moment of time, the sum total of those past creative efforts which have gone into the building of present personalities. Much of this creative work may have been done well. Much may be mediocre or gravely disordered. Unfortunately, we who are in time can work only with events and relationships of the present, or with those which we can shape for the future. The past cannot be remade by us. We cannot dip into history. We may try to make up for past faults. We may in some sense undo errors. We may enact a second time and rightly, that which was previously wrongly done. The one thing we cannot do is literally to recede in time. We cannot literally reenact correctly the very same series of events into which we have introduced that disorder which now needs to be undone. Time is inexorable. History is inaccessible. We can never relive the events of

the past and thus weave them afresh into something more desirable, more beautiful, more holy than that which we accomplished in our first attempt. This is what gives to the saying "opportunity knocks but once" such a tragic cast. Its tragedy appears when we realize how many evils we commit within the excellent opportunities presented to us, incorporating these evils irrevocably as disorders in the sum total of our personalities, as time flows by. We, in this flux of time, cannot go backwards and correct disorders. We must perforce carry them forward with us into the future of our lives. On the other hand, this going back into our time is precisely what God, who exists in eternity, can do. For Him there is no past which remains inaccessible to His action. In the Sacrament of Penance God reaches back into our past. He lays hold on events and upon situations which we would wish to change for the better, but which we cannot alter because they have flown away from us. He rearranges these things, re-creating that which is disordered. He then returns our lives to us, perfected afresh out of the past into the present, so that they may become in very truth offerings worthy of Himself when next we place them upon His Altar.

Our Lord once used a phrase in speaking to His disciples which is very significant in the present connection. He said: "Ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."¹⁸ It is thus in the Sacrament of Penance. Just as sorrow is not blotted out, but instead turned, that is, transubstantiated, into its joyous and positive eternal counterpart, so God, reaching back in time, through a Sacrament of the Church mediated by His Sacerdotal Minister, re-creates, re-orders the evil of the past into a present foundation for a future perfection. In this way God, with whom all things are possible, does powerfully make all things work together for good.

The Sacrament of Penance may be illumined by an analogy based upon the concept of our Catholic lives as artistic, creative activities. We may imagine ourselves as making up a group of student artists sitting at our easels in a studio class. We may suppose ourselves to be painting from a living Model placed at

¹⁸ John 16:20.

a point within our circle. Each of us paints a picture of the same Model, but from various angles, from various distances and directions according to his particular relative position in the group. Some of us may have great talent and may be already well trained in our art. Others may have but meagre gifts or be just learning the rudiments of our craft. Some are old and some are young and immature. Some may have just begun to sketch mere outlines upon the canvas. Others may be working upon nearly completed pictures, being engaged in putting in refined and finishing touches here and there. Perhaps none of us has succeeded in producing as yet, or from any point of view, a perfected work of art.

As we work and mix our colors and paint, as we conjure up our visions of completed pictures which will somehow convey all the beauty and meaning which we begin to discern in the Model who stands before us, the Master of the studio passes behind us. He criticizes, He suggests, He gives help as we may have need. He looks intently at that present work which some one of us has accomplished. He pauses, perhaps behind my own very work. He regards what I have done. Some of the work no doubt appears fairly well done. This is to be commended. My picture is, of course, still nothing like complete. Only the practised and discerning eye could understand my intentions for its final form. But my Master knows, because He has not only given me my instruction and training, but He has also provided the Model from which I now paint. Therefore He, looking at my work as I have thus far progressed in it, is able as no one else to see certain lines out of drawing, some colors here and there badly smudged. He sees some perspectives distorted, some of the highlights clouded, some of the shadows much too deep. All these defects will hinder me fatally. They will, indeed, actually prevent all my future progress and my completion of the picture. The Master pauses quietly. Taking my own brush in His hand, perhaps even guiding my hand without removing the brush, using all the same colors which I myself have placed upon my palette, with a few deft strokes He touches up my work. He straightens this line, corrects that drawing. All that I have done so clumsily and painted so muddily, He perfects be-

fore my very eyes. The picture is still my own. My work is not obliterated. It has not even been taken out of my hands, much less has it been completed without my cooperation. What has happened, however, is that my work has been perfected down to that point to which I had succeeded in bringing it. "Now," says my Master, "that is better. That is what you were trying to do and it is now something which I can commend. Now take your picture back entirely into your own hands and go on with it further yourself. All that which was amiss in the past is done away. The future you may now indeed perfect as I would have you do." It is after this fashion that Our Lord intervenes creatively in life, within the Sacrament of Penance.

Thus, in this Sacramental method, God perfects that bread and wine of our lives which we, at any particular occasion, propose presently to place upon His Altar for His reception into His Body and His Blood. The Man Jesus, within His individual life, did actually perfect a humanity which had no need of this kind of further Sacramental perfecting upon the level of natural creation. His humanity was perfected at every point in such wise that it was, in its own right, an acceptable offering to God. It is, however, never thus with the offerings which we bring forward. Our natural bread and wine always contain imperfections which are there through our human faults and wrongdoings. As has been pointed out,¹⁹ it is the function of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to receive those things which are perfected within the level of nature, out of those contingencies which necessarily inhere in them, into the level of Absolute Perfection. It is not, however, the function of that Sacrifice to remove imperfections which have accrued within our offerings upon the natural level. Actual *imperfections*, as distinct from contingencies, must be removed in advance of the Sacrifice. It is precisely this atoning work, this perfection of our bread and wine—which in the natural order are still found imperfect things in spite of our best human efforts—which is accomplished before every Sacrificial Offering in the Sacrament of Penance, in the Priestly Absolution of sin.

¹⁹ Chap. VII.

XIV

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY

THE English Prayer Book describes Holy Matrimony very beautifully as "an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and His Church."¹ Also, this same "honourable estate of Holy Matrimony" is without doubt at once the most important, the most beautiful and the most valuable natural human social institution within the common heritage of mankind. The human family is both a biological and a cultural institution; and the Church from the earliest times has recognized marriage as one of the most precious materials which the natural world provides for her supernatural use within the new and Divine social Order of the Incarnation. It is significant to notice that the first recorded public appearance of Our Lord as a mature man was at a wedding feast which, as the Prayer Book also points out, He "adorned and beautified with His presence, and first miracle that He wrought, in Cana of Galilee."² It was at a marriage feast, with all its accompanying festive joy and social merry-making that the Founder of the Catholic Church first "manifested forth His glory"³ to His Mother and to His disciples, graciously replenishing His host's failing supplies by turning water into wine.

The human family is the basic unit of the Catholic social life in this world. Family relationships are the foundation of the Catholic social structure; and they are therefore for the average person not only the most readily available materials, if one may so speak of them, but also the most beautiful and the most valuable materials which Catholic men, women and children may bring forward out of their natural world, to place as gifts upon the Altar of the Holy Sacrifice of the Church. Certainly

¹ Prayer Book Marriage Service.

² *Ibid.*

³ John II, 11.

no natural elements which enter into the substance of the bread and wine offered at every Mass are more fundamental, more profoundly and humanly significant than are the relationships and accomplishments which can be made to emerge and to mature within family life. What can be more valuable in the sight of God, more precious within the eternal structure of the Incarnate Social Life of Christ, than the offering of happy married love between man and woman, and the gift of children, once more to quote the Prayer Book, "brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of His holy Name"?

It is through such considerations as these that the natural institution of human marriage, hallowed and exalted to a position of unique importance by Our Lord Himself, has from early times come to be placed by the Church among the number of her Sacraments.

It is almost a truism which needs no repetition to say that whenever some new and fine thing enters into the lives of Catholics, their first thought will naturally be that of offering this to God and, in so doing, to weave it as a fresh contribution into the ordered social fabric of the Brotherhood of the Incarnation. Therefore, when a man and woman intend to be united in Holy Matrimony, their first thought will be to bring the new and lovely relationship upon which they are embarking, as a gift to God within His Church. They come at the very outset of their married life to place in advance this potentially matchless gift upon the Altar. It should be emphasized that it is in very truth *their* gift. A marriage between man and woman is a thing which in the natural order has been placed by God into their hands for its accomplishment. The actual ceremony of marriage is properly performed in a Church, but the man and woman themselves, and not the officiating Priest, are the true ministers of that marriage. The Church, in elevating natural marriage to the rank of a Catholic Sacrament, does not alter the natural structure of that institution. All marriages, throughout the whole history of the human race, both before the time of the emergence of the Incarnate Lord into that history and since that time, even outside the Christian Brotherhood, can be described as valid and true marriages, if they be entered upon by

mutual and free consent of the contracting parties and not in defiance of any existing impediments known to or understood by those parties to exist. The outward and visible sign, that is, the matter and form of natural marriage, consists in the contract made by the persons married and the words by which the contract is expressed. This matter and form of marriage, received as our heritage within the natural order of society, is retained by the Church when marriage becomes a Sacrament. For this reason, at the marriage ceremony, even when performed in Church, the actual words of the marriage contract and the declarations of mutual assent are repeated by the contracting parties and not said for them or on their behalf by the officiating Priest. The persons to be married, first the man and then the woman, with hands joined repeat the words: "I (giving the name) take thee (giving the second name) to my wedded wife (or husband), to have and to hold, for better, for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish (the woman may add "to obey"), till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth."

These words form the core of the Marriage Service, and it is clear that the people who take these words on their lips in the presence of witnesses are not married *by* the Priest, but rather do they marry each other in the presence of the Priest. The Priest, together with the laity who are other witnesses, are present as representatives of the Brotherhood of the Faith, the rest of the Catholic Family; and the Priest, at the end of the ceremony bestows the blessing of God, given through His Church, upon the newly married pair and upon their new and glorious undertaking.

Thus, in the hands of the Catholic Church, the natural institution of marriage becomes a Sacrament when it is undertaken by baptised Catholics, that is, by a man and woman who are already sacramentally within the Body of Christ, and when that marriage is brought forward by the contracting parties with the express intention of contributing it, together with all its new and precious human values, to the rich treasure of those human relationships already existing within the Sacramental

Body of which they are members. The contracting parties thus make their complete and mutual offering of their marriage to God.

To this approach to Himself on the part of a man and woman who are being sacramentally married, God, moving within the Sacrament, responds by accepting their gift. He catches, as it were, their future married and family life now just beginning but offered completely in advance of its fulfilment, to His own Heart. What they themselves have taken out of the natural order and freely given to Him, He receives into the supernatural order of His Incarnate Life. What they now accomplish together in time, He ratifies in eternity, and they twain are made sacramentally one flesh,⁴ not alone by their own mutual consent in His Presence, but rather by God's direct and gracious response to their offering. God, having received the human gift while it is still incomplete and, at this beginning, only a promise of finer things to come, returns it into the hands of the givers that they may henceforth complete it, going on with this offering unto the very ends of their lives. That which is begun by human beings within the Church is sealed by this response of God, so that the officiating Priest can truly say at the end of the Sacrament and just before the final blessing: "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

It should be clear from the foregoing brief analysis that the Sacrament of Marriage is a symbolism of the third order, and is in very truth Sacramental. It is Sacramental because those who contract a marriage within the Catholic Church are joined by an outward and visible sign of which they themselves are a definite and necessary part and in which they are profoundly involved within the Process of the Incarnate Life, as they contribute those new and acceptable values of the marriage they bring forward to the other riches of the Brotherhood of the Faith.

In God's response to the offering of the mutual life of their marriage, there is conveyed the grace to accomplish what it had otherwise been mere human rashness to promise in advance. God returns the new marriage into the hands of its givers, but,

⁴ Gen. 2:24.

as always when He returns our human gifts to us after He has received them, He gives His Holy Spirit that our frail human intentions in the gift may be made sure and strong by His Divine power. What God has received and given back to man, He will not suffer to be wrecked by human frailty, provided, of course, there is a genuine and continuing cooperation of the human wills involved with His Divine will. Thus, the grace conferred to both man and woman in the Sacrament of Marriage is the power of future fulfilment of a gift offered to God, and received by Him in advance of that fulfilment.

It is upon these considerations that the indissolubility of Sacramental marriage rests. That which has been sacramentally given to God cannot be arbitrarily or capriciously snatched back again by either husband or wife, whenever the task of continuing the fulfilment of that gift becomes, humanly speaking, irksome or tiresomely difficult. Christian marriage is not necessarily an easy thing. It is a vocation, filled with tremendous possibilities and potential values, the building up of a family life, growth in mutual understanding and true affection, the construction of a Catholic home. Such a vocation must call forth creative talent and discipline, individual and social, of a high order; and no great creative work is ever continuously amusing, carefree or even "happy" in any superficial sense. Neither can it be accomplished without much devoted and willing work. Along with many fine and glorious compensations, difficulties must and will arise. However, difficulties will be no excuse for terminating a marriage. Still less, even after a separation for some grave reason, may one or the other or both of the partners to a marriage attempt another and new "marriage" with other and new partners. In the light of our present analysis, such a suggestion is not so immoral as it is absurd, and it is certainly unworthy of the high vocation of practising Catholics.

Our Lord, in a number of passages recorded in the Gospels,⁵ makes the definite statement that those who remarry after divorce are not truly married at all, but live, rather, in a state of adultery. In one of these passages⁶ a phrase is put into Our

⁵ Matt. 5:31-32; 19:2-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18.

⁶ Matt. 5:31-32.

Lord's mouth which, if accepted as authentic, would permit a discontinuance of the marriage relationship in the single case of fornication on the part of the wife. However, the consensus of modern textual criticism does not allow the authenticity of the so-called "Matthean exception" of permitted separation and subsequent "re-marriage" on the grounds of unfaithfulness on the part of a wife—or, indeed, a husband, although a husband's unfaithfulness is not mentioned by Matthew in this connection. Nor does the Matthean suggestion recommend itself to the modern world to such a degree as it may have done to the ancient Jewish one. The modern man or woman is, as a rule, not over-impressed by this exaltation of a merely physical unfaithfulness into the position of the ultimate evil in a marriage relationship. Such infidelity on the part of a wife might have been the worst possible sin in a society in which an undoubted physical paternity was of the utmost importance in settling questions of inheritance and matters of vital social importance to the offspring. This is why a wife's sin with another man was anciently considered worse by far than a husband's sin with another woman. But these considerations have so weakened in the modern mind that there seems to be something unpleasant and even irrational in insisting that adultery, either of husband or wife, is a worse sin against the marriage bond than certain other grounds for divorce which, if one were to admit any "exceptional" reasons whatever, might, with a greater show of plausibility, be urged. In fact, it may well be suggested that physical infidelity on the part of a wife is precisely one of the things which a truly Christian husband should, upon any showing of contrition in his wife, be most ready to forgive and to forget. He who forgave the penitent woman of Magdala can hardly be thought of as setting His face against the idea of a husband forgiving an erring wife, and suggesting that a wife's infidelity is the one outstanding thing which can set a husband free from all further obligation to her, and which may deprive her irrevocably of her status as a wife.

A still more conclusive argument against the authenticity of the Matthean exception as given in his Gospel is that, as a matter of fact, it is inconsistent with Matthew's own immediately

following record of the amazed response of the disciples to Our Lord's remarks on marriage, into which the exception is inserted. If Our Lord had really been providing for the absolute avoidance of a marriage because of unfaithfulness on the part of a wife, it is hardly likely that the disciples—who were themselves familiar with this cause for divorce already allowed in their Mosaic Code—would have remarked upon Our Lord's words: "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry." But the absolute and unexpected indissolubility of marriage as a new element within the Brotherhood which Our Lord was then founding, was indeed a fact so novel and so difficult seeming to the disciples themselves that at first they found it impossible either to accept it or even to grasp its significance. Our Lord therefore replied: "All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given." It seems clear that this saying is given precisely to practising Catholics, and it is only to those who are living fully within the Sacramental Body of the Incarnation that there is provided the necessary grace to accept it.

It is unfortunate that the words of Our Lord concerning Holy Matrimony have been made the grounds of hard and legalistic-sounding controversies over the question of whether or not divorce must be "forbidden" by the Catholic Church. Put in this general way, the question hardly has any meaning. In the first place, it would seem scarcely likely that in His teachings concerning Holy Matrimony Our Lord should be thought of as legislating at all, in the sense in which a law court or divorce tribunal would interpret that word. When Our Lord says that people who "marry" after the breaking up of their first marriage are committing adultery, is this not to be taken rather as a statement of a truth than as part of some supposed legalistic rule concerning re-marriage? It is primarily a statement which illuminates the nature of Sacramental marriage within the Catholic Church, in order that those who enter upon it may understand as clearly as possible at the very outset the profound and intrinsically indissoluble nature of that social relationship upon which they are embarking. If this is well understood, as it must perforce be understood by Catholics,

divorce will not be regarded from the point of view of whether it is permissible or not, or of whether Sacramental "re-marriage" is legalistically conceivable in certain cases. With Catholics the case is rather that divorce and re-marriage simply do not come into the picture. The question of divorce between practising Catholics simply does not arise. No Catholics come to the Altar of God to offer a contingent gift. They do not qualify their offering at the very outset with the phrase: "We give this to God, provided it does not turn out to be too hard or too distasteful in the future." Such a qualification would vitiate the Sacrament at its very beginning. A qualified gift in the Catholic view is no gift at all to God. And while the future of any marriage is bound to be hard at times, in some cases extremely difficult and, humanly speaking, perhaps distasteful, it is precisely the grace of the Holy Spirit conveyed in the Sacrament which will prevent it from becoming "too" hard or "too" distasteful. No Catholic contemplates the possibility of defeat. As in every activity in the Church's life, the Catholic counts the possible cost in advance and is ready to face it. By the grace of God he has the victory assured. He remembers and believes wholeheartedly the words of St. Paul:⁷ "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted (that is, tried) above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Those who lead the Sacramental life can rest confident in the conviction that they will not be permitted by God to embrace a task which is beyond the power which He Himself will give them to fulfil. No difficulty will arise within the vocation of Holy Matrimony which can possibly warrant the contemplation of that complete and irrevocable defeat which would be openly acknowledged in divorce and some sort of permission for "re-marriage." When difficulties and dangers arise, all the resources of the Faith, together with the assistance, the care, the tactful intervention and support of our brothers in the household of the Church, should be available for our aid in making a difficult marriage a certain success. The failure of a Sacramental marriage would be a failure in the Church's corporate life, as well as in the individual

⁷ I Cor. 10:13.

lives of the people immediately concerned. Therefore we can be sure that the creative power given the children of God in His Body, the Church, will triumph over every obstacle. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith."⁸

It must be added, of course, that in cases of extreme difficulty in married life, cases which in the Catholic view are very much rarer than the secular world or even nominal Christians would like to believe, separation of husband and wife for a short time or even for an indefinite period may be advisable. But such separation is not equivalent to divorce, with permission to remarry. The Sacramental marriage is not dissolved so long as both partners to it still live. It may be urged in some of these cases that a permanent separation of married people must lay a cruel and dreadful burden upon certain persons who may be "innocent" of any guilt in bringing about their own sad situation. It is urged that these people should not be "punished" for the wrongdoings or perhaps for the total incapacity of their partners through something like, let us say, incurable insanity, or other causes which may render the mutual continuance of the full marriage relationship irrevocably impossible. Such innocent people it is urged, should, if they wish, be permitted to "begin life over again" with a new husband or wife. It is acknowledged by everyone that there is certainly much other unavoidable suffering in the world which does come to personally innocent people, suffering which must be borne with Christian fortitude. Such is the character of our disordered world. But, it is urged, in these exceptional cases of very difficult marriages, would it not be possible to mitigate suffering very easily, simply by letting an innocent young man or woman, whose marriage has been wrecked through no personal fault on his or her part, marry again? Surely it would not be in accord with the "mind of Christ" to insist on a continuance of *this* suffering by a hard and legalistic emphasis upon the Catholic rule of "no divorce." So runs a popular argument.

This is an argument which certainly arouses great human sympathy. Furthermore, cases to which the argument can be plausibly applied do actually arise. It is probably quite impos-

⁸ I John 5:4.

sible to explain to people outside the Catholic Faith why it is that, even under these conditions, the innocent person will not view a new marriage as a possible way out. This is that "hard saying" which only Catholics can bear. It is not that the Church will enforce an arbitrary rule upon such innocent people, who then continue to suffer against their own wills and wishes. It is rather that every instructed Catholic who is sincerely practising his religion, and who is brave with the bravery of Christ, will recognize a true Cross when this comes into his life. Crosses do not come to all Catholics in precisely this form of a marriage which is, from a human and natural point of view, wrecked and desolated. But those to whom such Crosses are given will, at the required moment, know how to take them up and follow Our Lord as He leads them forth upon the pathway of His perfected life, along the Via Dolorosa and up the slopes of Calvary. Very different this offering of the marriage may turn out to be from that which was expected when, with high hope and eager joy, it was first brought to God's Altar on the marriage day. But an offering it none the less is, and it is infinitely valuable, nay even glorious, within the Body of Christ, because, like Our Lord Himself, it is crowned with thorns and lifted up to God upon a Cross.

While divorce and re-marriage are so inconsistent with the Catholic view of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony as to be unthinkable, completely "out of the picture" as one might say; at the same time, in order that a marriage at the very outset shall be valid and a true marriage in the Catholic sense, certain preliminary conditions must be fulfilled. Among such conditions, for example, the consent of the two contracting parties must be mutual. This must also be deliberate and freely voluntary and neither of the contracting parties must be acting under the compulsion of fear or of some imposed constraint. Furthermore, the mutual consent to marriage must be shown clearly and openly, that is, indicated in the presence of other witnesses who can bear record that this consent to marriage, and not a mere promise to marry at some future time, has actually taken place. However, owing to fraud or deceit, or to some other circumstances, a couple may proceed with a mar-

riage and it may then be discovered or disclosed afterward that an impediment had existed all along. Under such conditions, the properly constituted authorities of the Catholic Church may proceed to investigate the case, and if they find that an impediment to marriage did in fact exist in the case of either one or both of the parties before the ceremony was performed, the Church may declare, not that the marriage is dissolved, but rather that in such a case no valid marriage ever took place. The ceremony in question, owing to the existing impediment or impediments, was, in fact, nothing but a sham, a simulation of the Sacramental rite of Matrimony. In such a case, no gift of a new married state was or could have been tendered and offered to God in His Church, for no such potential gift had come into existence.

It is clear that the declaration of the nonexistence of a marriage in any given case is a very different thing from granting a divorce in the case of a marriage which has actually taken place. Also the Church proceeds in such cases upon far different presuppositions from those upon which the secular courts would proceed. The Church will be interested primarily in preserving intact the integrity of her own corporate Sacramental life, that she may continue a fitting social tabernacle for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And she will be interested in preserving her Divinely given order in the lives of those of her individual children to whose aid, in their particular matrimonial difficulties, she is now summoned. In general, her reasons for declaring that a particular marriage has been void from the beginning will be very different from those for which a secular court might grant a legal divorce in the same case. On the other hand, many and perhaps most of the causes allowed by secular courts for legal divorce with permission to re-marry, will be ruled out by the Church as providing no cause or grounds whatever for a declaration of initial nullity.

In complete harmony with the Church's view that human marriage is one of the materials provided within the natural world, potentially a component of her corporate Sacramental life, the Church looks upon a marriage between unbaptised

persons as a valid marriage in the natural order, although it is not Sacramental. On the other hand, every marriage between validly baptised persons, when mutual free consent is made thereto in the presence of witnesses and where there is no existing impediment, is a Sacramental marriage, whether it is contracted in a Church or not, before a Priest or a Justice of the Peace, or even, as in the case of certain Sects, without any officiating minister whatever. A marriage between unbaptised persons can be made Sacramental if both parties to the marriage be subsequently baptised. Furthermore, all marriages contracted outside of the Church for whatever reason, Catholics will wish to bring more clearly and, as it were, more openly into the Church, to offer them to God upon His Altar. In such cases, the marriage is not, of course, repeated; but it does receive the blessing of the Church, which had been lacking up to that time. Also, practising Catholics whenever possible will wish to have Mass offered at the time of their marriage. This is suggested by a rubric at the end of the Marriage Service in the English Prayer Book, and the American Book explicitly provides a Collect, Epistle and Gospel for use at a Nuptial Mass. A Mass does not render a Sacramental marriage any more of a Sacrament than it would have been in any case; but in such an offering of the Holy Sacrifice, the newly married pair are enabled to place their newly-found, the great and beautiful gift of their marriage upon the Church's Altar in union with Our Lord's own Body and Blood. They thus offer it up, a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice of their very selves together, their souls united, their bodies made one flesh, returning all to Him who is Himself the Author of this their present and their continuing future gift.

We are not here primarily concerned with problems of moral theology, but there is one question which is at the present moment very much under discussion, and which often arises in connection with any consideration of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. This is the question of whether Catholic Christians may be permitted or may not be permitted under any circumstances to employ scientifically devised methods for the prevention of conception of children.

It must be said at once that here in a brief space there can be made no complete analysis of this difficult problem. For this, the reader must be referred to the contemporary writings of authoritative Catholic moral theologians. It is possible, however, to point out the attitude of mind in which this problem, in common indeed with every other moral problem, should be approached by any Catholic who wishes to apply the principles of his Faith to practical matters.

As we have been pointing out, Catholics are primarily concerned with coming into the presence of God, bearing gifts of all that is best and finest which they can succeed in wresting and creating from out of the matrix of a more or less intractable and resisting world, the fallen world of natural men. It is clear that no gift of married life can be considered complete unless it is fulfilled in the procreation of children. The English Prayer Book suggests that the procreation of children is the primary reason for the existence of the institution of marriage. But we would not need to go beyond the point of saying that this is but one reason among other important ones; we need merely insist that the bringing of children into the world is an essentially indispensable, constituent part of the offering of every normal married life to God.

In present-day thought there is much emphasis laid upon the value of the physical relationship between husband and wife, as a precious thing in itself, without reference to possible resulting offspring. The physical union of husband and wife is certainly very inadequately described as being "merely" for the purposes of reproduction, and to this every Catholic will immediately subscribe. The English Divine, Jeremy Taylor, says that the union of man and wife is intended not only for the procreation of children, but also "to avoid fornication"—that is, to satisfy a most powerful and natural physiological urge within an abiding and permanent bond of deep human love, and not outside of such a bond as a mere temporary relief from physiological and nervous tension. He continues that it is also "to lighten and ease the cares and sadnesses of household affairs, or to endear them (the husband and wife) to each other." But Bishop Taylor adds most carefully that marital intercourse should never be

indulged in "with a purpose, either in act or desire, to separate sensuality—i.e. the immediate pleasure—from those ends which hallow it."⁹

Here we have the Catholic approach to the marriage relationship. Catholics are married in order to give to God the very best experience of human love which they can mutually achieve. At the same time they include within this gift a family life and family love which normally is only fulfilled if children are present in the home. Therefore, without minimizing the value and the joy of their own love and everything which is experienced by man and wife within that love, Catholics will also always be eager to accept those new responsibilities and opportunities for further self-giving, which are the further fruits of the marriage relationship. Marital intercourse has, in other words, a value in itself; but this is a value which is vitiated if it is grasped at for itself alone, with a calculated and wilful avoidance of the responsibilities and work involved in the bringing up of children. No married love can be acceptably offered to God while, thanks to the resources of a modern scientific technique, it is being selfishly guarded as the sole possession of two married people. Such a procedure is not to bring the natural institution of human family life into the Divine Order of the Incarnation, but rather to corrupt and pervert it to an end more evil than could previously have been achieved without the cunning help of scientific knowledge.

It is clear, from the Catholic point of view of offering and sacrifice to God, there can be no valid reason for the limitation of the number of children in a family, unless it be for the reason of improving the quality of the gift of Holy Matrimony and family life. On the other hand, it is also clear that children, while a chief value in married life, cannot properly be described as the *only* value within that offering; and when we speak of improving the quality of the latter, every aspect of its

⁹ Quoted by the late Professor H. L. Goudge, in a pamphlet *The Question of Contraception*, published by the League of National Life, London. Professor Goudge's own arguments in this pamphlet are not very convincing, even when we find ourselves in at least a partial agreement with his conclusions. In particular, his references to the sex problems of young people are inadequate and almost completely unrealistic.

content must be considered, both the potential values attaching to children and those which attach chiefly to the relationship of husband and wife alone. Hence it would seem that there can be nothing contrary to Catholic morality, in principle, in planning intelligently in advance how the best possible family of children may be brought into the world. Among other considerations in this connection, for example, it might be decided in some particular case that for the best care, attention to their upbringing and to their education, it were wisest not to have a child every year, but rather that they should be spaced, with two or three years interval between the dates of their births. Other factors which could influence this kind of planning might be considerations of health and robustness, both for mother and for children. Indeed, a large number of considerations will be present in any intelligent planning for children on the part of married people. Catholics will not wish to come to any final conclusion in such a matter without recurrence to sincere prayer, and without consciously bringing the problem into the circle of their Sacramental life. They should also confer with their spiritual Director and Confessor who, in this case, stands as a representative of the entire Church. These are matters which concern the whole Church as the Divine Family of God, and it is a great error to consider them as solely the private concern of any one particular married couple. Such would not be a Catholic point of view.

Once it is decided upon valid grounds that the number of children and their relative ages in a given family should be intelligently planned for and regulated, the method of achieving this result, on the part of a man and wife who are practising Catholics, is the method of abstinence from intercourse. For Catholics this is by no means the difficult thing, much less is it the "dangerous" thing which the pagan modern world would like to pretend that it is. As a matter of fact, it is well known that periods of continence ranging from a few days duration to the space of weeks or even months, are often enforced upon members of savage tribes by taboos connected with such things as seedtime and harvest, hunting or making war.¹⁰ And Wester-

¹⁰ For examples of this consult Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*.

marck in his authoritative history of human marriage cites instances of rules of savage races enforcing abstinence upon man and wife not only during the period of a wife's pregnancy, but sometimes for the space of a year or even several years after the birth of the child.¹¹ What is possible for savages under the compulsion of taboos may, at least, seem not impossible for Catholics by the help of Sacramental grace.

But even in the case of married Catholics, it does probably need to be admitted that strong and valid reasons for the spacing or limiting of the number of children at some particular period may be found side by side with great difficulty in the matter of complete continence. In such cases, it would seem that what Jeremy Taylor calls the "endearing" of husband and wife must not be set entirely in jeopardy by an arbitrarily strict enforcement of a rule against the use of contraceptives, or, at least, a rule against the use of any human ingenuity or scientific knowledge to circumvent the unaltered course of nature. Concessions in this direction have already been made by Roman Catholic theologians in suggesting that, if continence be impossible, intercourse may be permitted during the so-called "safe period" of the wife's sexual cycle, and the probability of conception thereby be much reduced. This is the so-called method of "rhythm" in birth-control; and it is urged that this use of human knowledge in circumventing nature is more "natural" than is the use of that same ingenuity applied to the making and using of material contraceptives. To many this will seem to be drawing a "distinction without a difference." To many, this permission to take advantage of the "safe period" in the limitation of births of children, will seem merely to be the recommendation of a very unsatisfactory and inefficient method of contraception. If continence is not to be enjoined for Catholics, it seems rather logical to put all scientific methods of any description for hindering conception, the method of "rhythm" among them, morally upon the same level.

The question then is: do reasons for the prevention of conception ever arise sufficiently valid to warrant the use of arti-

¹¹ Edward Westermarck, *History of Marriage*, 2nd Edition, London, 1894, pp. 483ff.

ficial methods to accomplish this end, when the ideal method of conjugal continence, if enforced, would give rise to greater injury to the values resident in family life than can safely be permitted? The answer to this question will probably depend chiefly upon the state of intellectual and spiritual progress which has been achieved by the particular married couple in whose case the question arises. Catholics, in the planning of their families, should always adopt the method of continence, when any birth limitation is considered advisable. If not, they should aim at this as a categorically and emphatically required ideal. But in the meantime, upon the advice of a competent Director, they may perhaps be permitted to use other methods, always with the clear knowledge that there is thus chosen not something intrinsically permissible or good in itself, but something which for the time being is deemed the lesser of two evils. The other evil in such a case might for example be the piling up of such nervous strain and tension within a household, if complete continence were attempted, as to endanger the integrity of the whole family life. Here it must be said again, that the aim in such cases must be to grow in grace and spiritual strength until continence, for the sake of the end in view, is not only possible, but actually becomes a glorious mutual endeavor.

In the foregoing discussion we have assumed that both husband and wife are attempting to lead the Catholic life. This is, unfortunately, not always so; and cases may arise in which only the wife or only the husband is in any sense Catholic. In such cases also, it may happen that a spiritual Director may permit the use of contraceptive methods by the Catholic partner for grave and sufficient reasons. The fact to bear in mind in the whole discussion of this complicated problem, is that every Catholic is always attempting to improve the quality and beauty of married life, considered as a whole—and children are normally an essential part of this whole—that it may be perfected as a fitting sacrifice to God and a fitting element within the new world of the Incarnation, the Catholic Church. No Catholic worthy of the name will ever grasp at the personal joys and happiness of married life without a willingness, nay a determined desire, to shoulder the responsibilities, the work, the cares

which naturally follow upon them. No Catholic will ever seek within married life to "separate the sensuality (the word in this use has, of course, no deprecatory sense) from those ends which hallow it." Married Catholics will in general have families limited in size only by considerations of the welfare and general quality of the children, thought of in relation to the family as a whole, and never limited by considerations of selfish comfort and ease of husband and wife. Even such a necessary consideration as the health of a mother in some particular case, will not be thought of only in relation to the mother as an individual. It might be feared that an additional child would endanger a mother's health. In such a case, a stronger reason for birth prevention than the merely personal well-being of the mother, might be found in the fact that the mother's good health was also necessary for the sake of other children already in existence, therefore dependent upon her ministering care. Here again it is the quality of the family as a whole which is the chief consideration. In Catholic families, if births are prevented in some cases or postponed in others, this is never in order to escape responsibility and work, but rather to better the quality of that for which further responsibility and harder work are still eagerly to be undertaken in the future.

The foregoing analysis of the problem of birth control is, of course, little more than an outline of a point of view. In no sense should it be taken as a carefully exact or complete exposition of the principles of moral theology involved. However, even from this inadequate discussion, it should be clear that many or perhaps most of the reasons for the free use of scientific contraceptive methods which are urged by pagans and some secular humanists today, are completely outlawed by the Catholic belief concerning the character of Sacramental marriage, that is, of *Holy Matrimony*.

For example, it is very frequently argued that people of the working class should not only be freely taught the best contraceptive methods, but that the proper appliances should very likely be furnished to them gratis by the state. It is contended that these people, always economically on the borderline of poverty, often unemployed and living on doles and government

relief, cannot possibly provide a family environment adequate to the upbringing of a large number of children. They cannot provide a proper educational and cultural background. Often they will find difficulty in providing proper clothing or even food. More children in the families of such an economic class will simply swell the multitudes of the unemployed and, very likely, the unemployable, because they will not only be too many in numbers, but also too "low-grade" in physical and mental strength to grow into useful men and women. Obviously the solution for the calamitous problem arising from this disastrous and unwelcome fecundity of the "lower" classes is to teach them how to prevent the birth of children. It is even urged in some quarters that this is the only possible solution for a problem which seems to be growing ever more acute in our Capitalist social system.

No Catholic can for a moment grant the validity of this argument without sharply challenging the assumptions upon which it rests. By what right or with what authority are normal, healthy, competent men and women, people who on all moral, intellectual, and physiological grounds are quite capable of producing healthy and valuable offspring, to be discouraged from doing this because of inadequate economic resources? The Church must insist, with no uncertain voice, that those who are both capable and desirous of bringing children into the world and of giving them a sound upbringing in a good home, cannot rightly be deprived of this privilege simply because they are victims of a bad economic order. In a world which can be made to produce enough and to spare, not only for its present population but for many times that number, an economic order which imposes an arbitrary poverty upon potential fathers and mothers, is iniquitous and stands condemned by that fact alone, if by no other. Those who bring their gifts of married love and complete family life to God must not be hampered in this endeavor by man-made systems which are capable of being changed for the better. To point out that there are grave difficulties if not impossibilities placed in the way of adequate family life among masses of poorly paid or unemployed people, is not to bring forward an argument for the righteousness of

contraceptive methods, but rather to advance the strongest possible argument for social and economic revolution.

Here again, in some particular case a Confessor or spiritual Director might have to admit that a given poverty-stricken married pair, in spite of their own best efforts to find work and adequate income, were simply unable to give adequate food, shelter and education to an unlimited number of children, or even to the few children, which as a minimum, the couple might desire. Such a state of affairs could only be considered as a reproach and a rock of offense against the whole social and economic structure. While coffee is burned in Brazil, cotton plowed under and corn and potatoes destroyed in America, how can the Church possibly accept the poverty of our hypothetical pair as an inevitable thing, or as such an insoluble problem that it can be made a moral excuse for compelling them to have few or no children? Obviously the Church cannot do this. This is one of those very practical ways in which Catholic morality clashes with the social structure of the surrounding world. Here, from a fresh angle, is forced to our attention that "question which ought to hold a pre-eminent place in the interests of Churchmen, namely, how we are to return to a condition of things nearer to the intention of Christ—if it may be, without violence and revolution; but if not, then anyhow to return!"¹² Such married Catholics who are victims of our iniquitous economic system should have it pointed out to them how enforced limitation of the size of their families is a monstrous evil, although, of course, it is an evil imposed by the economic order, and by no means implies their own personal fault or guilt. They may be advised to bow to what is, for the time being, inevitable, because revolutionary social changes probably cannot come over night. They may be permitted to limit the size of their families, if possible by abstinence; if not by abstinence, which under the present ordinary condition of working class life may turn out to be difficult to the point of being disastrously undesirable, then by some other available contraceptive methods.¹³ But this per-

¹² Bishop Charles Gore, Borrow-in-Furness Church Congress Sermon, 1906. Quoted by Conrad Noel on the title page of his *Socialism in Church History*, London, 1910.

¹³ Rome allows the method of "rhythm" only.

mission, surely, can only be extended under intelligent and determined protest against the intolerable conditions which make it temporarily advisable. The lie direct must be given to those who counsel birth control for the proletariat, as an acceptable solution for the preservation of those economic arrangements which produce these intolerable conditions, but from which their own comfortable incomes are all too often derived. Poor people who are forced by economic conditions to prevent the birth of children whom they wish to bring into the world, should probably be permitted the use of a contraceptive method, abstinence or other, only upon the condition that they pledge themselves to work for social revolution, the very overthrow of present society, and the establishment of a new order in which the economic factor can no longer be a determining element in the plans which Catholic parents wish to make for bringing children into the world.

XV

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY UNCTION

REFERENCE is made in the Gospel of Saint Mark to the Apostolic custom of anointing the sick with oil.¹ We read that once when Our Lord sent forth His disciples on a special preaching mission "he gave them authority over the unclean spirits." This authority, it would seem, must have included both an authority and an injunction to heal sick people, with an accompanying Sacramental rite of anointing, because we are immediately told: "They (the disciples) went out and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." At a later date Saint James seems to refer to a continuation of the same Sacramental practice in the Church.² "Is any man among you sick?" he writes, "Let him call for the Presbyters of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

A ceremony of offering a prayer for recovery in the presence of a sick person and of anointing him with oil at the same time, was a custom usual among the Jews from very early times. Indeed, ceremonies of anointing are to be discovered almost everywhere among the religions of mankind. The idea that oil or fat has healing or strengthening properties goes back to the most primitive times. It is probable that in the opinion of primitive man fat or grease shared an efficacy with blood in transferring the virtue or strength of a slain sacrificial victim to whomever might be smeared with it. In early times the victim who provided the fat was probably another human being. Later, of course, animal sacrifices were substituted for human ones. Later still, long after the notion of the transfer of strength or health from a slain victim to a living person had been forgotten, olive

¹ Mark 6:7-13.

² James 5:14-15.

oil came to be regarded as endowed with strength or health-giving properties.

It is clear, therefore, that the ceremony of anointing for the healing of the sick has its roots in early sacrificial rites, and may be allied as well to certain contemporary magical practices which also derive from the same remote sources. As a matter of fact, a like thing may be said of all the Sacraments of the Church. The Sacrament of Baptism, for one example, has in all probability, as we have already seen, a long lineage reaching back through various kinds of ceremonial washings, symbolic cleansings and lustrations, to an ancestral rite of human sacrifice by drowning. Again, the Christian Sacrifice of the Altar is prefigured in the sacrificial worship of Israel, and this in its turn had developed from earlier pagan and heathen sacrifices. It need not surprise us that certain rites, ceremonies and symbols which had been in the age-long use of mankind were taken over by Our Lord, both in some of their forms and in some of their matter, and used to the high solemnities of the Sacraments which He gave to His Church. It would, indeed, have been cause for surprise if He had not done this. It is the fundamental privilege of the Incarnation itself that it should seize upon materials already present within the natural world of men. These materials, as we have also pointed out, are often veiled in ignorance and superstition, they are often perverted to evil ends, they are often disorganized and fragmentary. Nevertheless, even a pagan or heathen sacrifice enshrines a certain profound truth, although this may be buried and hidden under an overlay of magic. Such a sacrifice, when redeemed into the Incarnation and extricated from its human perversions, may find a place within the re-created Divine Order of the world of the Church. At the time of Our Lord, the common rite of unction of the sick within the religion of the Old Covenant of Israel, had already been stripped of most of its evil and magical contexts and had been put to an excellent symbolic use. In the fullness of time, it had been prepared as a rite fitting to be elevated to the dignity of a Sacramental symbolism.

The ancient rite of anointing the sick with oil becomes the Sacrament of Holy Unction when it is chosen by Our Lord as a

symbolic action within the third order of symbolism; and it is thenceforth used to mediate the re-created physiological sanity of God Incarnate to the bodies of men and women. Within the Divine Order of the Incarnation no sharp distinction can be drawn between spiritual and physical health. Bodily disorganization, disease, debility and that complete bodily dissolution which is death itself, are, in the Catholic view, always closely linked with spiritual disorganization and moral chaos. It was the Divine intention for man that he should not only be free and sinless, his companionship with God unbroken and unmarred, but also that within this perfect relationship he should be free not only from disease but also from death itself. Saint Paul, in writing to the Corinthians³ refers to sin and death as closely associated with the wilful Fall of Man, and he speaks of Our Lord as delivering man again from death. "As in Adam," that is, as through man's deliberate and wilful turning from God, "all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." St. Paul's reference is to the ancient warning contained in that great allegory of the Fall of Man, which is recorded in Genesis. Here, man's choice of his own pleasure and immediate human satisfaction, set by himself over against his far, high destiny in God, is linked with death in such a way as to imply that without such human rebellion the destiny of man would have been unbroken physical health and life. It is only when man shall eat of the forbidden tree of knowledge of good and evil, that is, in the day in which he introduces disorder into his Divinely ordered life, knowing evil in the only way it can be known, by committing it, that dissolution and death are also introduced. The warning of this is given to man not as a threat of punishment, but as an objective revelation of a fact inherent in the created universe: "In the day when thou eatest of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt surely die."⁴ Sin and physical dissolution are thus placed in exactly the same category.

Therefore, because it is the function of the Incarnation to open the way for the restoration of the Divine Order which has been ruined within creation by the wrongly directed will of

³ I Cor. 15:22.

⁴ Genesis 2:17.

man, it is also its function to open the way for the restoration of physical health and life. Catholics who lead the Sacramental life together are expected to be both spiritually and physically well and strong. Part of the evidence chosen by Our Lord Himself for the fact that He was indeed the Son of God, the Logos Incarnate, consisted in pointing to His undoubted power of bodily healing. When Saint John the Baptist, cast into prison, forsaken by many of his own former disciples, despaired almost of seeing the Kingdom which he had expected when he baptised Our Lord, he sent to Jesus to ask Him plainly whether He were, after all, the Christ of prophecy. Our Lord replied directly that the evidence proved Him so: "The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached."⁵ Health and sanity are implied in the Divine Order now emerging anew into the world.

Another clear evidence that Our Lord considered spiritual and physical disorders in exactly the same category is shown in the vivid account⁶ of the healing of a paralyzed man at Capernaum. Because of the great number of people crowding into a house to hear and see Our Lord, this man was actually let down through a hole in the roof made by his loyal friends, who were determined at any cost to get the ill man near to Jesus. Our Lord, impressed by this persevering faith, "said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." These words sounded strange and even blasphemous to all the orthodox Jews who were present. In their minds they did not connect the healing of souls with the healing of bodies, and they objected. They objected that a mere man, as they thought, should presume to forgive sins, as if grasping at a prerogative of God alone. Our Lord's reply shows that for Him the forgiveness of sins and the healing of a body are so closely connected that the words used in the healing action are thought of almost as a mere matter of terminology: "Which then is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" "But," He would seem to continue, "If you object to my spiritual terminology and in your stupidity cannot

⁵ Luke 7:22.

⁶ Mark 2:1-12.

see that sin and sickness are much the same kind of disorder in human life, and that ye may know, that ye may be taught this lesson once and for all, I shall adopt the other terminology." Turning to the sick man He said, "Arise, take up thy bed and go thy way into thine own house." The man was healed and did as he was bidden.

We must also note that Our Lord does not think of physical illness as a punishment for sin. Physical disorganization does not result from spiritual chaos, but is a part of it, a physical manifestation of precisely the same fundamental evil which is manifested in sin. The orthodox Jewish view, unfortunately still held by many ignorant people even today, is that which finds expression in the comforting speeches of the friends of Job. These good people were quite persuaded, in spite of Job's own protestation to the contrary, that his sad plight as he sat on the dunghill, poverty-stricken and covered with boils, was a direct result of some previous, if hidden, wrongdoing. Such would still have been the popular opinion in Our Lord's own day. Such a theory implies, in addition, that those who do not suffer some physical or material disability are, perforce, morally better people than those who do. This latter notion is explicitly denied by Our Lord. On one occasion,⁷ when He was told of the massacre of certain Galileans, apparently with the motive of drawing from Him some word of condemnation of those men which would accord with an orthodox view of physical calamity, He replied instead: "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay." He then proceeds to tell His hearers that they themselves are in an equal danger. "Except ye repent," He says, "ye shall all likewise perish." That is: "Your present spiritual disorganization is in the same category with the destruction of your bodies. The destruction of your bodies would merely be another manifestation of that chaos which is already present in your own souls." To drive the point home, Our Lord alludes to another incident then well known of a group of eighteen men who had been killed in the collapse of a building at a place called Siloam. Here, He says, is to be discerned no punishment

⁷ Luke 13:1-5.

of these men for a previous wrongdoing, no manifestation of a Divine retributive justice, but instead, an example of a chaos which at one and the same time is both physical and spiritual. Apparently, in Our Lord's view, physical calamity, sickness and death should no more be called punishments for sin than should sin itself be called a punishment for physical calamity, sickness and death. Human repentance, that is, a self-giving, a self-abandonment to the Process of the Incarnation, is the cure for both sets of evils which at their root are one and the same. Ordered physical wholeness and sanity are the gifts of the Incarnation to the bodies of men, just as spiritual wholeness and sanity are to their souls.

During Our Lord's own lifetime, the Church which He was forming about His own Person was made conscious of the power which she was already receiving to triumph over the evil and disharmony of the world physical, as well as over that of the world spiritual. And before His Ascension Our Lord numbered among the signs which should mark a person baptised into His Incarnation, that he should, in His name, cast out devils; speak with new tongues; take up serpents; drink any deadly thing without being harmed; and, finally, lay hands on the sick, who will then recover.⁸ Here is bestowed a control over a wide variety of bodily dangers and evils, and the Evangelist Mark adds that these signs did in fact follow the disciples as they went forth carrying the Gospel into the world.

Later on, Saint Paul, in a letter to the Church in Corinth,⁹ had occasion to rebuke that Church for grave laxity, unworthy offering of the Sacrifice of the Mass and a frivolous attitude toward the Holy Communion. He plainly implies that when Catholics deliberately permit the disordered chaos and evil of the world to be brought into contact with the Presence of the Altar, that is, with the Sacramental emergence of the Order of the Divine Life, one may well expect to find so grave a spiritual inconsistency manifested in bodily physical disorder and, he says to the Corinthians: "For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

⁸ Mark 16:17-18.

⁹ I Cor. 11:17-30.

Therefore, we may conclude that for a Catholic to be ill, whether it be through personal fault or carelessness or not, is by just so much to be enmeshed and caught in the disorder and evil of the environment of the world, that disorder which is called "Original Sin." It is the function of the Incarnation and its extension in the Church to deliver people from this disorder, moral, intellectual, aesthetic and physical, engrafting them through the door of Baptism into the Church's potential perfection, which she is in process of actualizing here upon earth.

Viewed in this way, illness, physiological disorder of the bodily organism of an individual Catholic, is no more a strictly private affair than is sin or spiritual disorder. If one brother in the Faith is ill, the wholeness and health of the entire Brotherhood are adversely affected. The Church, as representing Her Lord, responds to an individual disorder by sharing her own corporate health, which is the health of God Incarnate, with the person who is ill. The individual who is ill should first receive the Sacrament of Penance, being absolved by a Priest so that all spiritual disorder shall be corrected. He then receives the Sacrament of Unction. A little oil, which has previously been set apart and blessed by the Bishop, that is, by the Sacramental representative of the whole Church, is put upon the sick person with the sign of the Cross, and a prayer is made for his recovery. In the Sacrament of Penance, as we have seen, God restores all personal inward spiritual order, and thus knits up the corporate order of His social body, in so far as the individual in question has marred it. In the Sacrament of Unction that same life-giving order is imparted to the individual body; and if it is possible within the context of all the rest of the person's spiritual and physical relationships, the body also is restored to health. The Sacrament of Unction, accompanied by prayer for recovery, involves the sick person, through an effectual symbolism, in the eternal soundness of the Incarnate Life as this emerges into the physical world.

Two errors need to be guarded against in considering the Sacrament of Unction. First of all, the Sacrament does not take the place of rational medical treatment. God's intervention in the disordered world, as the ordering power of the Incarnation

impinges upon it, always presupposes man's own uttermost cooperation. Man's rational mind is given him to use. By God's grace and the leading of the Holy Spirit, man is not only expected, but required, to employ all his natural faculties in order that he may approach from his direction, from the level of nature, that perfection which God makes ultimately possible for him from the level of super-nature. Therefore, to argue that the Sacrament of Unction should take the place of medical science would be analogous to arguing that the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion should make unnecessary all rational and moral efforts on the part of men for self-improvement, and this we have already seen to be quite untrue. Such a view of any of the Sacraments would set them back into the categories of magic.

And secondly, neither is the Sacrament of Unction allied in any way with that other approach to the problem of physical disorder which goes under the name of "Christian Science." "Christian Science," in so far as it has any rational content whatever, appears to deny both the reality of matter and, as a result of this denial, the reality of either spiritual evil or of sickness. Sickness cannot have real being since this would involve a disorder in matter, and matter does not itself exist. Sickness, therefore, is simply a wrong kind of thinking, a malady of mind. And mind is the only reality. Sickness can therefore be nothing but an appearance, an "illusion" which will vanish when wrong-thinking is corrected by "truth." The Christian Sacrament of Unction, on the other hand, affirms both the real existence of matter and the fact of its disorder, one of whose manifestations sickness is. The Catholic Faith asserts that this disorder has come into our creation not through "wrong-thinking" but through the deliberate, wilful, wrong activities of men. It may partly be set right by rational human effort; but completely cured only by the re-creating intervention of the Eternal Logos, that same creative ordering power which in the beginning made and perfected all things by bringing order out of primeval chaos. As a matter of fact, all the Catholic Sacraments, employing as they do real matter in a world of time to mediate an eternal Spirit from a world of eternity, are in flat contradiction to,

and irreconcilable in every way with, the strange, eclectic body of heresy which goes under the name of "Christian Science."

A word must be added concerning that modified use of Holy Unction which, in the Latin Communion, is known as Extreme Unction. It has become the custom of the Church of Rome to give Sacramental Unction only to people who are "*in extremis*," at the point of death.¹⁰ Such a use of Unction overemphasizes its spiritual absolving or curing power, at the expense of its power to bring about bodily healing. If, in any case, Unction be postponed until, humanly speaking, all hope for continued life has to be abandoned, its Sacramental function tends to become confused, or to blend with those of final Absolution and the last administration of the Blessed Sacrament commonly called the Viaticum. This seems a corruption or abuse of the Sacrament of Unction, and it is unfortunate that its use as a definitely healing Sacrament has practically been abandoned in the Papal Church. This use of Unction as a final rite for the dying is of relatively late origin, not being hinted at before the ninth century, and not being expressly called "Extreme Unction" until the twelfth century in a writing of Peter Lombard. The custom may have arisen because of the unwillingness of the laity to receive the Sacrament, owing to a superstitious dread that it meant that their friends and families were secretly thinking them to be dangerously ill if a Priest were summoned. Something of that same quality of dread is found among backward people today, who sometimes refuse to go to hospitals because they imagine only desperately ill people do that, and going to a hospital seems to them like going away to die. Fortunately the Anglican Communion, in her first English Prayer Book, as in the American Prayer Book of today, reemphasizes

¹⁰ The use of the expression "Extreme Unction" has been derived by some authorities from the fact that this Unction of the sick is the final or "extreme" one in a whole series already received. The earlier ones would be those at Baptism, Confirmation and, in some cases, Ordination to the Priesthood. (Exceptional people like the English Monarch would also have received an Unction at their Coronations.) However, Peter Lombard (1100-1160) states that Extreme Unction is thus called because it is given to persons *in extremis*. *The Catholic Encyclopaedia* agrees with this explanation. Furthermore, in the Roman Communion, both the *Rituale* and the *Codex Juris Canonici* restrict Unction to those in danger of death. See *Liturgy and Worship*, S.P.C.K., London 1932, section on Visitation of the Sick, p. 490.

the curing and healing power of the Sacrament of Holy Unction, the sharing of the health and soundness of the Incarnate Life with whomever among the members of its corporate body is suffering and ill.

It requires only a relatively superficial reading of the Gospels to realize that Our Lord considered His acts of healing the sick not as casual accompaniments or incidental results of His ministry upon this earth, but as intrinsic parts of that ministry, and as inevitable witnesses to the emerging Divine Order of the Kingdom of God. Evidence is also clear for the fact that not only the Apostles, continuing Our Lord's Life, but the entire early Church together with them, expected the healing of souls and of bodies to go hand in hand, and that in practice they found this to be a fact. It should be cause for much anxious heart-searching on the part of Catholics in the world today, that the healing ministry of the Church has been largely allowed to fall into disuse. Indeed, this might almost be taken as an evidence of a lack of proper faith, of an attitude toward our Holy Religion which is in some sense defective. In Our Lord's day, the healing of the bodies of men always came as a Divine response to their faith in Him. "Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole" becomes almost a formula in the Gospel records of the Miracles of Healing. It may not be going too far to reverse this pronouncement, and to say, with caution of course, and acknowledging a lack of complete understanding of all the circumstances in any particular case: "If ye be not healed, ye may be judged to have but little faith."

Even in those quarters where sporadic and somewhat locally limited attempts have been made to revive the ministry of healing within the Church, the approach to this matter has all too often been from the direction of a modern and subjective psychology. It is a serious mistake to seem to confuse the Sacrament of Unction with anything akin to hypnotism or to psychological suggestion. The Church certainly does not reject the need or the usefulness of what is called suggestion in the therapeutic treatment of either mind or body. However, the healing power of the Sacrament of Holy Unction, as we should now be able to see, is not based upon psychological suggestion

any more than are the benefits of the Sacrament of Penance based upon what is sometimes called "psychological release" through confession on the part of the penitent. Psychological suggestion and psychological release respectively may be important collateral accompaniments of both Sacraments, but they by no means exhaust their content. The core of the Sacrament of Holy Unction, as it is also that of Penance, is the ordering power of God emerging within His Catholic Church. Therefore, all who desire to restore the Sacrament of Unction to its rightful position in the Catholic life should at the very outset examine its dogmatic basis. Unfortunately this dogmatic basis has recently had strangely small emphasis. There is a story of someone who, in speaking of the great riches and power of the Catholic Church in the world, counting over in particular, and with some satisfaction, the great numbers of hospitals and schools and homes for the weak and helpless which she has established, observed: "It can no longer be said that the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." "It would also seem," came the reply, "that neither can the Church say, as in the days of the Apostles, 'take up thy bed and walk.'" When the Catholic Church can again speak these life-giving words with power to heal, we shall indeed know that her primitive vitality is being reborn.

Our Lord and, at times, the disciples, not only cured sick people, but actually raised certain ones from the dead. Nevertheless, in the fallen natural world the fact of bodily death remains. Even those who, like Lazarus, were restored to life from the tomb, may be presumed to have suffered a second and final physical death. On the other hand, as far as we can judge, physical death does not differ in *quality* from sickness or from any other less catastrophic and final intrusion of disorder into the order of the body. As we have now seen,¹¹ the organism of the body, as of the mind and spirit of man, maintains its ordered living integrity by appropriating the elements of a relatively chaotic environment into the order of its own life-process. Disease can be thought of as a failure of the creative ordering power of the body to defend itself against the partial encroach-

¹¹ Chap. III, pp. 86ff.

ments of an external relative chaos. When disorder enters, the body, summoning all its strength and the special emergency methods of its ordering power, often gets the better of this encroachment. It repels chaos from its fabric, and restores itself to wholeness. Even when no disorder which we recognize as disease is present, this kind of creative appropriation of chaos into living order is continually going on. Even the eating of health-giving food means the introduction of a bit of relatively chaotic material environment into the body; and when, for one reason or another, this is not immediately seized upon by the body's ordering power, it will cause discomfort and illness. All through life this battle between the organic wholeness and integrity of the body and its unorganized environment goes on. Unless this creative ordering activity is ceaselessly maintained, disorder intrudes; disease and finally death, the triumph of chaos over order, ensue. As it is said of Indian villages, when they cease to maintain themselves as tiny ordered settlements against that natural relative chaos, animal and vegetable, which fairly beats at their doors, "the jungle then comes in." We are led to believe¹² that if man had preserved intact from the beginning that ordering power which God had first shared with him, then man could have maintained his body, as well as his soul and mind, united and intact within the natural world for an indefinite period.¹³ Nevertheless, we are compelled to recognize the fact that the triumph of our living bodies over physical chaos, which the Incarnation does make possible in cases of illness to a greater degree than would be possible in this unredeemed natural world, is nevertheless only a partial or a provisional triumph. We are led to expect no indefinite prolongation of natural life, either through medical and surgi-

¹² Cf. Genesis 2:17. It seems to be implied here that man should have expected to die only in case he were to eat of the forbidden tree. St. Paul also teaches that death is the result of man's departure from the end appropriate to his true nature, that it is a result of the Fall. He writes that it is in Adam that all die. (I Cor. 15:22)

¹³ Even to this day the aetiology of death is not understood. No satisfactory scientific answer has yet been returned to the question: "If the living body can maintain its organized integrity at all, or can repair damage to itself in any measure whatever, why cannot it do so completely and indefinitely?" We do not yet know precisely why living bodies "grow old," nor why eventually they must needs die of old age.

cal aid or through Sacramental healing. Death, physical dissolution of the body, still remains the lot of every man and woman. It is clear that our deliverance from this final and complete intrusion of chaos comes to us neither through the Sacrament of Unction, nor in any other manner within this world. The last enemy that shall be overcome is death,¹⁴ and death is vanquished by Our Lord not within nature, but in super-nature. It is defeated only in the resurrection of the body,¹⁵ which is made possible through the triumphant Resurrection of Our Lord Himself.

This brings us face to face with a question concerning the kind of personal immortality which the Church believes will be the portion of the individual members of the Body of the Incarnation. And it can be said with considerable assurance that the notion which the average modern person has about this last article of the Faith, "the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come,"¹⁶ is seriously defective. If a belief in some kind of individual survival with a continuation of personality after physical death is retained at all, it is all too often thought of in "purely spiritual" terms. The idea of a personal resurrection in Our Lord's consummated Kingdom at the end of the history of our world, a resurrection which could in any true sense be described as a "resurrection of the body," is now largely abandoned. On the other hand, the Catholic Church is always careful to guard against what are called "purely spiritual" interpretations of her beliefs, lest they lead, as they always do in fact, away from the truths which are inherent in the Incarnation. Therefore, the Church in this case also rejects the concept of some kind of vague, shadowy or disembodied survival of individual personality after death within this world. She insists instead upon the necessity of a belief in the resurrection of the body, because this is essential to the full realization of that immortality which she believes Our Lord makes possible for men.

As a matter of fact, there is nothing distinctively Christian in

¹⁴ I Cor. 15:26.

¹⁵ Apostles' Creed.

¹⁶ Nicene Creed.

a belief in a disembodied spiritual survival after the death of the body. To entertain this idea is neither to go forward in intellectual understanding of the problem of immortality, nor to advance in insight into spiritual realities and the meaning for us of Our Lord's Resurrection. It is, instead, to take a long step backward, and to embrace those pre-Christian ideas about survival which were the common property of the ancient Classical world and, to some extent, of the Hebrews themselves. For the Greek world contemporary with Our Lord certainly had a belief in the continuation of individual human Shades, as they were called, surviving the death of human bodies. It is, however, interesting to note that the Greeks, along with their contemporaries of the Classical and even of the Jewish worlds, had come to regard this kind of ghostly survival not with pleasure, much less with enthusiastic anticipation, but rather, with an intense distaste. With a sure instinct for the truth, the Greeks felt that life in a body was the only conceivable full and complete life. Any sort of disembodied survival after death was thought of by them as pale and wan, mournful and devoid of warmth and zest, out of contact with all interesting or stimulating experience of any real world, human or divine.¹⁷ Indeed, the Greeks held their traditionally accepted view of survival after death in very low esteem. In the *Odyssey* it is related that when Odysseus, in the underworld, tries to comfort the dead Achilles by suggesting that he still "has great power among the dead," Achilles replies: "Don't speak to me of death! I would sooner be an hireling servant of the most penurious man alive than ruler over all the kingdom of the dead."¹⁸ This reflects the Greek view of life beyond the grave. Furthermore, there is plenty of evidence in the Hebrew Psalms and ancient Canticles, to go no further, that the Jews of old had no pleasanter ideas in this matter. "The dead praise not thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into silence."¹⁹ "For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the

¹⁷ For an excellent and full treatment of the Greek and other ideas of survival as compared with the Christian view of Immortality, cf. John Baillie, *And the Life Everlasting*, Scribner's, 1937.

¹⁸ *Odyssey*, Book XI, Lines 484ff., quoted by Baillie, p. 82.

¹⁹ Psalm 115:17.

pit cannot hope for thy truth.”²⁰ Such were the beliefs of the Hebrew poets and we may gather from this that, in their view, looking forward to entering upon a future existence as a disembodied spirit was far from a joyous prospect. Not only did it mean being cut off from that fullness of vital experience which was to be had only so long as life within the body endured, but, curiously enough, it seems to have meant a separation from God Himself, rather than the closer and more vivid knowledge of Him which Christians expect in the life of the world to come.

Strictly speaking, any sort of belief in personal survival after death was an unorthodox view for a Jew to hold, even as late as Our Lord's own day. Belief in such survival had become fairly widespread, but it was not in accord with strict Hebrew tradition. The ancient Religion of Israel found its sufficient and satisfactory answer to the question of immortality in the continuing history of the Hebrew Nation. However, within this continuing social body of the Chosen People, individuals came and went in every generation, entertaining as individuals no hope of survival beyond this world. The Sadducees of Apostolic times, who were the religious party laying claim to traditional orthodoxy, held also to this part of their traditional faith. By the same token, they, more than most others, denied all hope of a resurrection from the dead.²¹

The Church, on the other hand, is in possession of the glorious evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of the historical record of His Empty Tomb on the third day after the Crucifixion. Basing her belief primarily upon this evidence, taking this as a clear revelation from God of that kind of risen life which He holds in store for men if they will but receive it from Him, the Church advances to her own distinctive conception of a full and glorious individual life after death for all who are baptised into the Kingdom of God. This renewed and complete life opened to man by Our Lord's absolute triumph

²⁰ Isaiah 38:18.

²¹ Cf. Acts 23:6. On a certain occasion, St. Paul, summoned before the High Priest, was able to cause something like a riot in the assembly, which was attended both by Sadducees and Pharisees, by introducing this controverted question. The Pharisees opposed the Sadducees in this point.

over death, is to be viewed as something infinitely fuller and closer to God than any state of being which can possibly be achieved while men and women still remain within this world. This Christian Immortality is bestowed as a crowning fruit of Our Lord's Incarnation, and it must involve man in all his wholeness. Therefore the Church insists that its bestowal must of necessity be accompanied by something which can be described only in terms of the resurrection of the body. Thus, with that same insight into the nature of man, which, as we have just seen, seems also to have been the possession of the ancient world, the Church proclaims the fact that as far as human beings are concerned, full and complete existence, complete actualization of man's true nature, is inconceivable apart from some sort of body. If this be true for life under natural conditions, how much truer must it be for that completer and more glorious life which is the hope of Christian Immortality!

In this question, the Church finds herself in agreement with present-day psychologists. These would now insist that a human person is complete only within a body, and it is impossible to conceive of him as complete in any other way. The old belief in some sort of dichotomy between mind and body, or between soul and body, has completely disappeared in scientific circles. We must believe that the human body is not merely a kind of temporary instrument through which the mind has somewhat inadequately to express itself under the conditions of this life, but rather that the mind and body are complementary elements in a single organic whole. A contemporary psychiatrist writes: "I am body-mind."²² It is certain that St. Thomas Aquinas, although using a different terminology from that of modern psychology, would have insisted with an equal emphasis upon the same kind of intrinsic relationship within complete human nature, and upon the essential and indivisible wholeness of every human being. He would have expressed the same truth by writing: "I am body-soul."²³

To this intimate and intrinsic relationship between mind

²² Dr. Eric Straus, Article "Psychology" in *An Outline for Boys and Girls and their Parents*. Edited by Naomi Mitchison. p. 143.

²³ The suggested phrase is that of Dr. Straus.

and body, present-day medical science is also unanimous in its testimony. There are a multitude of ills which are said to be of nervous origin, that is, ills whose physical manifestations of disorder begin in disorders within the human mind. Such facts are too well known to need enumeration. The physical disorders which, in these cases, result from mental or nervous disturbances, are often described as functional. That is, they are disorders like certain palpitations of the heart, certain kinds of indigestion, or they may result in some types of paralysis. Such bodily disorders may be accompanied by no actual physical lesions or actual damage to the organs affected. In other words, the ills of the body arising from the mind are very often difficulties in the operation of the body rather than defects in its actual physical organic integrity. However, this is not always the case. The mind may, on occasion, cause striking, specific and very highly specialized alterations both in the structure and performance of parts of the body. Probably one of the most readily available examples of this kind of thing is the development of the so-called Stigmata, copies of the physical Wounds of Our Crucified Lord, on the bodies of certain deeply religious people. St. Francis of Assisi is reliably reported to have developed such Stigmata. However, we do not need to go to the medieval period for our examples. During the nineteenth century thirty cases of Stigmata were authoritatively reported. One of the most striking cases is that of Thérèse Neumann of Konnersreuth, Bavaria, living in our own day. Her case has been investigated, described in detail, and carefully analysed from a rigorously scientific point of view by an American physician.²⁴ His conclusion is that, in this case, the Stigmata, which include not only the Nail Prints in hands and feet but also the Wound in the side, the marks of the Crown of Thorns and even, on occasion, tears of blood, are genuine. That is, they are true Stigmata in the sense of not being artificially induced. They arise from alterations in the body tissues in such wise that the body conforms in specific ways to the mind and soul of a religious Mystic, one whose whole attention is focussed upon the

²⁴ Dr. Joseph V. Klauder, *Archives of Dermatology and Syphilology*. Vol. 37, No. 4, pp. 650-659. April, 1938.

Crucified. They are "true somatic representations of psychic events."²⁵ It would seem that we need not go beyond this very arresting and compellingly authentic example of stigmatization to conclude that, in the case of a human being, mind, body and soul are inseparably linked. While in thought they are in some sense distinguishable structures, they cannot in fact be torn apart and at the same time retain an undiminished individual integrity. They can be thought of separately, just as the skeletal system and the muscular system of a body might be thought of separately. They are not, however, capable of *self-sufficient* separate existences. They belong essentially to one integral whole.

Man is by nature a rational free being. He is free, as we have previously seen, by virtue of his rational nature; but this rational freedom is expressed within a body, and we can think of it as being fully expressed under no other conditions. The body is the necessary instrument of all man's free thought²⁶ and action, of all his creative activity. It is the necessary instrument of his allotted privilege of cooperating with God in the restoration of order to a disordered world within the Process of the Incarnation. And if this free cooperating power is to be consummated within the eternal Kingdom of God, and not destroyed at the end of our history, it is impossible to conceive of the wholeness of man's nature as being restored except within the promised body of his resurrection.

It will further illuminate this point to notice that the Church herself does believe in some kind of disembodied existence of the human soul after the death of the natural body. This, according to Catholic belief, is a temporary state of being upon which the soul enters while waiting for an ultimate resurrection and an accompanying restoration of the body. Such a resurrection will come only at the end of history, the end of our time, at the Parousia of Our Lord. In the meantime, those who die before the time appointed for the final consummation of the Kingdom of God are deprived of bodies, and, by the same token, so the Church believes, are deprived in some measure of a full actualization of their human nature. With profound in-

²⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 659.

²⁶ It should be borne in mind that man's brain is part of his physical body.

sight into the necessities of that nature, the Church views this state of the disembodied soul as one in which all free creative initiative is absent. The possibility of free rational spiritual growth has been lost with the loss of the body; for the body is the instrument of the expression of that freedom. The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God.²⁷ They are completely passive and utterly dependent upon His action upon them. Apart from such action no change, no growth is possible to them. In such a state the soul may be gradually changed and perfected, but it would probably be incorrect to refer to this kind of change as growth. Growth would imply at least some positive contribution to development springing from an inner initiative of the soul, and in a disembodied state the possibility of this seems to be denied. Left to itself, a disembodied soul would be completely static. It may be doubted whether it could undergo any change or movement whatever, apart from the sustaining action of God upon it.²⁸

Thus, although a disembodied soul may be further perfected by the action of God, nevertheless all potentiality for freedom, for rational individual initiative, must be thought of as, for the time being, in abeyance. It is for this reason that disembodied souls are said to remain in Purgatory. This word expresses precisely what is implied by such a state of being. Here, souls are, as it were, passively moulded. They are further ordered and perfected, provided of course, the achieved development before death in the natural world has in fact supplied a basis for this in the substance of something which has a capacity of receiving a further passive perfecting from God. This is a process of purg-

²⁷ Wisdom 3:1.

²⁸ In the Intercessory Prayer which introduces the Canon of the American Prayer Book Liturgy for the celebration of the Holy Communion, there is a commemoration of the Faithful Departed which prays that they may be granted "continual *growth* in God's love and service." If our own present observations are valid, this intercession is badly worded. It displays an unfortunate lack of insight into the difference between embodied and disembodied existence, in the case of human beings. The word "growth" here implies a theological error, because it gives a wrong teaching concerning the state of the souls in Purgatory. It implies a scientific error, because it presupposes the possibility of a true growth apart from the body. It seems a pity to enshrine this kind of confusion in the permanent Liturgy of any part of the Church. The ancient Catholic prayer *Requiescant in pace*, May they rest in peace, is much more appropriate in such a connection.

ing, and it is a process which prepares the soul in such wise that it may be fit for its resurrection at the end of the world.²⁹

It is the faith of the Church that in the consummated Kingdom of God, man will partake of that state of being which Our Lord's Resurrection opens to him. Here all the functions of his nature will be restored to him and he will emerge again in the Divine Presence, free, rational, an individual being re-created perfectly in the image of God. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that when God bestows again upon man the possibility of exercising his creative rational freedom in all its integrity, man will again be clothed in a body as a very first fruit of this restoration. This might, as a matter of fact, be put the other way round. It could equally well be said that the bestowal of complete rational freedom upon the disembodied soul is, after the passive state of Purgatory, precisely what we mean by the bestowal of the resurrection body to man. The regaining by man of the fullness of his own nature within the consummated Kingdom means the putting on of that body which can, in some sense, be called the resurrection body *by definition*. For when we speak of human nature endowed with its full rational freedom we are by that fact speaking of man functioning not as a disembodied but as an embodied being.³⁰ Therefore, if Our

²⁹ We speak here of what might be called the average soul. The average man or woman in this world may expect to develop only to such a degree as to possess a soul which has a capacity for a further perfecting. If, at the time of natural death, the soul has already achieved, by God's grace, a condition which makes it fit for the fullness of life in eternity, it may be presumed to await the resurrection in the very Presence of God and of His holy Angels, as these already look upon the Beatific Vision. Such, it is believed, are the souls of the Christian Saints. It can hardly be supposed, however, that even the souls of the Saints, while they remain disembodied, have that fullness of positive being which will be theirs at the resurrection.

It remains only to add that such individual souls which in this world achieve not even the capacity of being further perfected in Purgatory, or who are found to have rejected God's action upon them irrevocably in advance, may, at their resurrection, find themselves re-embodied, but utterly separated from God and from all possibility even of any approach toward Him. Such, we must believe, is the lot of those individuals who, in the end, will find their appropriate abiding place in hell.

³⁰ We believe, of course, that there exist orders of created beings with natures such that they can indeed be completely actualized apart from bodies. There are orders of created rational spirits who have never possessed bodies nor have their natures required them. The angels are beings with such natures. In the present connection we speak only of human nature when we say that its perfect

Lord does rebestow upon us the fullness of our own lives within His Kingdom, as we most surely believe He will, this is merely another way of saying that we believe in the resurrection of the body, and in a manner which will be appropriate to our future life.

Concerning the actual nature of the resurrection body, there has been much discussion. The discussion begins with St. Paul³¹ and continues to our own day. Certainly Our Lord's own Body after His Resurrection, although obviously continuous in some way with the body of His earthly life, was not exactly *like* His material human body. It could pass through walls and locked doors.³² It could appear and disappear as He willed. In this Body, as for example in His appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus,³³ He could withhold Himself from recognition even from very close friends until He willed to make Himself known. On the other hand, that His Resurrection Body was—and therefore *is*—in some true sense material, is shown by the fact that on many occasions, according to the Gospel records, It dispersed and reflected light. Within our universe, this is as much a property of what we call matter as is the potentiality of being picked up or handled, in the manner in which the Apostle Thomas did in fact once handle the Body of the Risen Lord.³⁴

However, one thing seems clear. Our Lord's Risen Body is in some way definitely continuous with that body which was His during His earthly lifetime. It was still the organ of expression of Himself, the Body which expressed His human personality, His very own Humanity, as this was drawn without any break or discontinuity out of the contingencies of time and space, into the level of super-nature and His eternity. The chief thing which seems to distinguish His Resurrection Body from the

actualization requires a body. It should be noted in this connection that if angels rebel and separate themselves from the Divine Order, they cannot be redeemed again within the Incarnation. This is precisely because *they possess no bodies*. Incarnation implies a body. In the Christian view, Satan and his angels are irrevocably fallen, and to all eternity.

³¹ E.g., I Cor. 15:35ff.

³² John 20:19, 26.

³³ Luke 24:16.

³⁴ John 20:27.

body of His human flesh is the fact that He seems therein to be in complete control of it. His own creative rational human nature is now taken completely into His Divine Nature. No longer do the processes of our world exercise any determining control over Him, as they did to a considerable extent while His body was still within the world of natural creation. By the power of His perfect accomplishment within nature, and by His Resurrection, He has triumphed over those bonds and those determining factors which inevitably limit man's freedom while he remains still within a fallen world. He becomes, as it were, complete Master in His own house. His Body becomes, in an absolute sense, the perfect and obedient instrument of His creative power. Therefore, whenever He, in His Risen Humanity, acts, His Risen Body emerges, perfectly implementing and perfectly conforming to that Act.

It cannot be so with us while we remain within this world. At best, our natural bodies greatly determine many of our acts and many of our impulses and desires. They therefore greatly limit or hamper the complete freedom potential in our rational natures. Within this world, we can never be extricated from or made to transcend this world's contingencies. But we may believe that at the resurrection, we too shall receive from Our Lord a share in His Risen Body, in such wise that we too, set completely free from the bonds inherent in a fallen world, may partake according to the full capacities of our created nature, of the complete and blessed liberty of the sons of God. Therefore, it would seem that at the resurrection we shall receive something finer and more glorious than could ever have been the lot of man even if, while remaining on the level of his originally perfected creation, he had continued free from sin and all disorder. Risen in the consummated Kingdom, man assumes indeed the full potentialities of his nature as these might have been made actual within the world of nature, within an un-fallen world; but in addition, he is to be given a share in Our Lord's Risen Life. The substance of man's natural body will be transubstantiated, in his resurrection, into the Substance of the Body of the Risen Christ. Thus does God, in the Incarnation and Resurrection of His Son, do more than merely restore

man to that state of perfection which was naturally his before his own wilful rebellion and fall within this world. He leads him forth out of the time process, and into the eternity of the consummated Kingdom. Herein is shown God's own omnipotence, in that He not only repairs and re-creates the order of His world, but from it raises up something infinitely finer and more glorious than would have been possible even without the Fall of Man!³⁵ Men who are redeemed in the Incarnation and risen with Our Lord receive a free gift³⁶ of immortality which is above and beyond the potentialities even of a completely actualized human nature, were this to be left upon the level of natural creation.

From this we may understand the profound insight shown in those words which the Church uses in her Liturgy for Holy Saturday.³⁷ These words, at first so strange seeming, take their full significance when we think of that redemption within the world, and of that resurrection in the world to come, which are now prepared for man. "*O truly necessary sin* of Adam, which by the death of Christ was done away!" Thus does the Church exult as she lifts on high the Paschal Candle, alight with the glory of the Resurrection. "*O happy fault*, which was counted worthy to have such and so great a Redeemer!" Thus shall the last state of redeemed man transcend even the natural perfection of his first state, and by just so much as the Resurrection Body transcends the body of this world. In this way does the Incarnation triumph not alone over our physical and spiritual disorders in this world, but, in the resurrection, it triumphs also over natural death itself. Fallen chaos on the natural level yields to natural order, and then, through the gateway of very death, this new creation is received in all its wholeness into

³⁵ *Summa Theologica*, I^a. Quaest. 2 Art. III. Ad. 1. St. Thomas's authority is, in turn, St. Augustine, who treats of this matter in the *Encheiridion*, Chap. XI.

³⁶ Cf. Romans 6:23. St. Paul says that the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus Our Lord. The word "gift" here used is a technical word of military origin. It refers to a bonus or largesse distributed to the Praetorian Guard by the Emperor at the time of his accession. Immortality, then, is thought of as something bestowed over and beyond that which is possible to man either through his own efforts and deserving, or merely by virtue of his created nature.

³⁷ Found in the *Exultet*, the Preface for the Blessing of the Paschal Candle.

eternity. "This corruption must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up victoriously."³⁸ It is in the resurrection that the battle with the world's disorder is ultimately won and, with a victory which transcends creation, men shall rise again within a Kingdom which is consummated and sealed to all eternity.

³⁸ I Cor. 15:53-54. R.V. margin.

PART THREE

THE INCARNATION AND THE SOCIAL ORDER

XVI

THE PAROUSIA AND SOCIAL ACTION

IT HAS been our present argument that just as Our Lord Himself was occupied with the perfection of His humanity as a necessary foundation for the Sacrifice of the Crucifixion and as a sufficient substance for the glory of His Resurrection, so also, the Church must be occupied with the redemption and perfection of the human world, completing her extension of that identical foundation, as a sufficient substance for the consummated Kingdom of God and for the glory of God's heaven.

In apparent opposition to this argument it has been, and still is, often urged that, while Our Lord Himself was undeniably concerned with the perfection not only of His own human personality but also with the perfection, as individuals, of those who followed Him, He seems nevertheless to have had relatively little to say concerning the social perfection of His environmental world. And even if Our Lord did teach that His Kingdom must grow within the world as a living organic Process which should leaven that world, which should put forth roots in human society as a living vine sends its roots into its surrounding soil, it is argued that the Church herself throughout most of her history seems largely to have missed the full and logical implications of this teaching in her own dealings with her environment. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that there is a measure of truth in these statements, and a sufficient measure sometimes seriously to embarrass those Christians who believe, on other and excellent grounds, that Catholicism may under certain conditions imply profound and radical changes in the social environment. One of the principal reasons for this relative silence on Our Lord's part and often, after Him, on the part of the Church in matters which concern social change, is found by critics, among whom are both friends and enemies of Christianity, in what is called the Apocalyptic teaching in Our Lord's Gospel. Therefore, before proceeding to examine

the practical nature of some of those changes in the social environment which might be demanded by a properly revolutionary Catholicism, this question of whether the Apocalyptic teaching does in fact logically rob the Church of any and all legitimate right to interfere in the practical world of men's affairs, must first receive a brief examination.

To the Apocalyptic teaching in the Gospels we have already referred.¹ One of the most certain facts to which the Gospel narratives bear witness is that among the manifold teachings of Our Lord concerning the nature of His Kingdom, one clear and very emphatic element is His prophecy of the consummation of that Kingdom at the end of history. There is to be a Second Coming, His appearance with power and great glory. This is called the Parousia, and it is then that the sum total of perfected accomplishments within His historical Kingdom here in earth shall, when the ultimate hour strikes, be finally received out of nature into super-nature, out of time into His eternity. We have also previously noted² that if an exaggerated or, more disastrous still, an exclusive emphasis be placed upon the consummation of the Kingdom of God at the end of time, this may easily tend to overshadow and eventually to eclipse all sense of the importance of the preparation of the substance of that Kingdom here within the historical process. In addition, if the belief becomes predominant that the end of our time and the Parousia of Our Lord are very shortly to be expected, either in a few years or, at the most, within another generation, the re-ordering of our world seems to be of little importance—primarily because it comes to be felt that in such a case there is not a sufficient period of time available for that tremendous work even if it were undertaken. Those who entertain this belief, while they may still hold to the necessity of preparing *something* here in earth in the way of a new social perfection, as well as perfected individual lives which will be worthy of Our Lord's reception when He appears, will almost inevitably seek only to build up a relatively small and select community for this purpose. Such a small community of elect and saved individuals

¹ Chap. IX, pp. 247ff.

² Chap. IX, p. 249.

is all that the shortness of the time will permit them to form; and this community will come to be looked upon not as the whole world in process of incipient re-ordering and redemption, but rather as a tiny group extricated or salvaged out of the world's disorders. If this point of view prevails, the Christian community ceases to be that leaven of the whole world of which Our Lord spoke. The disordered world tends to be left more and more to itself that it may go its own way to perdition. Even its improvement is despaired of. Christianity is perverted into a religion of the extrication of the relatively few from evil, instead of developing into what it essentially is, a religion of the overcoming of evil and of the redemption of the whole world, rather than its abandonment.

It can, in fact, be argued from certain sayings of Our Lord and from certain attitudes which He assumed toward particular situations during His lifetime, that He too believed that the end of the world and His Second Coming would not be very long delayed, that there would be but a brief interim between His Ascension and His reappearance to consummate His Kingdom. He did say, to be sure, in reply to a direct question of Peter, James and John, who enquired of Him in private concerning this matter, that He possessed no knowledge whatever of either that day or that hour when He should come again.³ But even in this context, He by no means implies that the hour might be delayed for many years, still less for centuries or even millenia. A straightforward reading of Our Lord's words would lead one to believe that His uncertainty extended only as to whether His Second Coming might be within a year or, perhaps thirty years; for He commands His disciples to be on the alert and to watch, as if that day would certainly come within their own lifetimes. On another occasion He prophesied concerning His Parousia: "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, until all these things be fulfilled."⁴ In this prophecy also He seems clearly to convey the impression that even those to whom He was then speaking would remain alive to welcome Him when He should come again.

³ Mark 13:32.

⁴ Matt. 24:34.

Our Lord's own personal sense of urgency and of the shortness of time available for work within the world, is recorded on still another occasion, when He sent forth His twelve disciples on a preaching tour within the confines of Israel. The disciples were instructed to remain only in those villages or cities where they should be well received, at least by a few of the inhabitants. If in any place all the inhabitants proved hostile or completely unreceptive, the disciples were told to waste no time in lengthy persuasions or arguments. The implication of this seems to be that there was no time available for such arguments. The disciples were to shake the dust of such unresponsive cities from off their feet, and go on quickly to more promising fields of work. Our Lord then goes on to prophesy that when the disciples, left to themselves after His Crucifixion and Ascension, should continue their preachings and warnings to the world, they would not even have time to go throughout all the cities of Israel in their evangelizing work, before He should again appear.⁵

It is a fact also so well known that it needs no detailed emphasis, that not only the disciples, but the early Church of the first few generations after their time, continued to look for the Parousia as a thing to be expected almost, as one might say, from day to day. The question must arise, did the early Church understand Our Lord correctly or is it rather the case that, in the midst of the anguish and persecutions which she found her-

⁵ Matt. 10:23. The Evangelist himself seems to connect this particular prophecy with that special missionary preaching tour which the disciples undertook at Our Lord's command while He was still alive. Such a connection makes the saying exceedingly difficult to interpret. Our Lord's words were: "Verily, I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come." These are scarcely the words to be addressed to men who were being sent out to preach for a limited space of time, while Our Lord Himself, alive in the flesh, awaited their return. It has been suggested that they should have a "spiritual" interpretation, and that Our Lord merely meant that the disciples' preaching would have the effect of converting the people and that He would "come" in this sense into the lives of all who were thus led to know Him. This seems a very far-fetched explanation, raising more questions than it answers. It is more logical to believe that this saying, in its original context, was to be applied to the disciples' evangelizing work after the Ascension. If this is true, it also suggests that Our Lord thought that the interim between the Ascension and the Parousia was to be too short for very extensive work. In this connection, see Bishop Gore's *New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, the note on this passage, by P. P. Levertoff and H. L. Goudge.

self encountering at the hands of the world, she tended to read back into His Apocalyptic teachings a promise of His return more speedy than He Himself had actually implied? It is certainly at least conceivable that the longing on the part of the Church for Our Lord's return, which culminated in the cry "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus,"⁶ caused her greatly to exaggerate Our Lord's teaching in this regard. It is also possible that the Church's early writers, even the Evangelists themselves, somewhat warped His prophecies to give to the Parousia too imminent a cast. If this is so, we might interpret the Evangelists' reports of the Apocalyptic sayings of Our Lord Himself, in so far as these imply His quick return, as being somewhat magnified or highly colored by their own beliefs.

On the other hand, it appears as a reasonably certain result of Biblical criticism, that the substance of the Apocalyptic sayings of Our Lord cannot be removed from the body of what is recognized as His authentic teaching without doing grave violence to all that is authentic in the Gospel records. It is therefore quite possible to hold that Our Lord did actually, in His human mind, greatly underestimate the historical period that was to elapse before His own Second Coming and the consummation of His Kingdom. In the light of His own admission that He did not know either the day or the time of the Parousia, His prophecies with regard to it cannot, it would seem, be considered as a Divine and therefore infallible revelation. The certain *fact* of Our Lord's Second Coming we may indeed take as indubitable revelation. But the prophecies of its time fall instead, and by Our Lord's own unequivocal admission, into the category of human opinion. In this case, the opinion is that of the One who is most intimately concerned in the matter. It is also the opinion of One whose human insight and spiritual understanding go deeper and farther than those of any other man or woman. Nevertheless, it would seem permissible to believe that in His human mind He might have been mistaken in this particular regard. We may go even farther and admit that this underestimation of the length of future history was actually the

⁶ Rev. 22:20. It is thus, almost with a cry for help, that the New Testament writings come to a close.

immediate reason why He Himself had so few specific things to say about the implications of His life—and of the Process of the Incarnation which begins in Him—for the economic and social arrangements which were found in the world environment of His day. The temporary appropriation and continuation of this human miscalculation within the early Church, a miscalculation so congenial to the mind of that day, would also account for the fact that the earliest Christians were neither much aroused nor very clear-minded in this matter of the implications of their Faith for the complete reorganization of the world. We can probably admit that within Christianity, from the earliest times, and no doubt stemming from this very lack of exact knowledge which we have just been discussing, there has continued that powerful current of thought, all too familiar to us, which has viewed Our Lord's religion as one of extrication from, rather than as one of redemption of, the world.

We have seen that the perfection of Our Lord's humanity, including the perfected structure of His human mind, was achieved while using only those elements which were available within His contemporary world. Not His knowledge of human affairs, in so far as this knowledge was concerned with facts within the level of our creation, nor His knowledge of past history, nor, by the same token, His estimates of future history, could, under the essential conditions of the Incarnation, have been eked out or complemented by supernatural elements unavailable to His contemporaries. This is one of the facts referred to when we spoke of Our Lord's humanity as possessing a contingent perfection.⁷ It is to this that St. Paul refers when he says that Our Lord "emptied Himself."⁸ The Self-emptying or Kenosis, as it is called from the word used in the Greek text, necessarily implies that Our Lord shared the same knowledge—or lack of knowledge—which was that of the best scholars of His day. It also implies that His estimates of the future, estimates of times or of succeeding periods of history which were necessarily made within His human consciousness, must at least have been parallel with or comparable to those estimates which any of His

⁷ Chap. VIII.

⁸ Phil. 2:7. Greek: *κενόω*, to empty.

contemporaries would have made, had any such shared sufficiently in those insights and intentions which were present in His conscious human mind.

The foregoing considerations make it seem not only credible, but likely, that Our Lord did actually underestimate the future period of history allotted to the growth of His Kingdom in this world. But as a matter of fact, whether or not He Himself could, within the capacities of His human prescience, foresee the age-long history which we ourselves already know and which may even now stretch from our time into a vast future, by no means vitiates the argument that the development of His Kingdom does in fact imply those revolutionary changes in the human social order which we have been discussing in these pages. To understand this, it is necessary to examine not what Our Lord seems to have thought about future history, but rather to regard the *provision* that He was making to meet its exigencies. Such an examination provides a far different picture. That provision for the future was nothing less than the foundation of the Catholic Sacramental Church, and it is sufficiently clear that this is something intended to inform a future vastly longer than the lifetime of a single generation succeeding to Our Lord's own day. If His own estimate of the length of the future, or the estimate of the early Church, had been the correct one, we can only say that in founding the Church He was tremendously *over-providing* for that future.

And this latter opinion it is quite impossible to hold. The implanting of the new Organism of the Incarnation as a new creation within God's old and disordered creation, was not by any means merely the work of Our Lord's human and conscious mind. It was the work of the Divine Logos who, although in some sense veiled by Our Lord's humanity, worked always behind and through this humanity, working a mighty work through the life of the Man Jesus, the full implications of which were not necessarily completely clear to the latter's human mind. It is not possible to believe that the Divine Logos within the Incarnation, who could not have erred concerning the exigencies of the length of future history, should have overprovided for that new creation which He was initiating in Our

Lord's accomplishment. Therefore, we must judge the historical time in store for Our Lord's spreading humanity within the social order, by the provision which He made for this in founding His Church, rather than by a reference to His human estimates of that time, or to the subsequent estimates of the early Church. By the same token, we must judge or, better, elucidate the implications for radical changes in the social order eventually inherent in the spreading of the Church, not in the light of Our Lord's underestimation of historical time, but rather in the light of actual experience with that Church which He did undeniably found, as this extends itself in a much longer history than He seems, in His human capacity, to have imagined would be the future case. In other words, God acted to found the Process of the Incarnation through the Man Jesus, even while the Kenosis in some measure veiled His human mind.⁹ And it is enough for the perfection of Our Lord's own individual accomplishment, during His lifetime, that He did in fact act completely and adequately in this Foundation.

Our Lord did not need to expound, and, in the nature of the case, He could not within His own generation draw out, the full social implications of His Action. He was engaged, indeed, one may say that He was engrossed, in founding a Church who

⁹ It is sometimes suggested that, because of the Kenosis, Our Lord, as a human being, acted to some degree as a passive instrument in the service of a higher power, in this case the Divine Logos, who acted through Him without His knowledge and without the cooperation of His human will. The Kenosis does not imply this in any way whatever. On the contrary, His human will was in perfect, free and intelligent correspondence with the will of God for Him at every moment of His life and at every point of His action in the world. Also His knowledge was both correct and sufficient for the particular work which He, as an individual, had to accomplish. The Kenosis applies only to the fact that Our Lord, as a human being, did not know in full detail all that the work which He was initiating would lead to in the future history of the social extension of His Incarnation. He did not know the full future history of the Church. His accomplishment was adequate to every exigency of that future. But that He did not know the full content of these exigencies is by no means to make Him out as a kind of Puppet of God during His earthly life. Even of ordinary human accomplishments it is frequently said in the light of a subsequent experience that "so-and-so builded better than he knew" or that "such-an-one spoke more truly than he recognized." Such subsequent appraisals of human work or speech do not imply that the original workers or speakers were somehow automatons in the hands of an overruling fate. They merely mean that the people in question were truly human and not superhuman in their intellectual grasp. Parallel considerations hold of Our Lord's perfect humanity.

herself would realize those full implications of her social vocation later—much later—in her history. This is without doubt the reason why Our Lord seems deliberately to have rejected the role of arbiter in individual cases of disorder which were brought to Him for judgment and correction within the still unredeemed contemporary world. It may be recalled that when a certain man begged Him to compel his brother to divide an inheritance with him, Our Lord disclaimed all jurisdiction within a world still unredeemed and replied: "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?"¹⁰ First the redeeming organ of a new social order had to be provided and firmly established; because it is only through the social Organism of the Incarnation acting upon the world that that world can be adequately attacked. As a matter of fact, if Our Lord had begun to interfere in the particular arrangements of His world, acting individualistically, as in the manner of this plaintiff's request, still more, if He had launched upon any preaching of radical and immediate social change, His efforts must have come to naught, and He would also have been diverted from His own proper work as Founder. He was neither a Reformer nor a Revolutionary in the ordinary sense of those words. The world conditions, economic and social, of His day, were not ripe for any final social revolution such as would be required to usher in the kind of relationships within human society which are fit to be incorporated into the Kingdom of God upon this earth. The time was ripe for founding the organ of that revolution, but the revolution itself was for the future. The time was ripe only for founding the Church. Any attempted social revolution in Our Lord's time, as He Himself seems clearly to have seen, would have resulted in petty local uprisings or insurrections. These would have been immediately and easily put down, and would thus have tended to bring discredit upon the whole of His work.¹¹

¹⁰ Luke 12:13-14.

¹¹ Such uprisings were not unknown in the tense social environment of Palestine under the Roman occupation. In the very early days of the Church in Jerusalem, the Apostles were summoned before the High Priest and his council to face the accusation of preaching their forbidden message and of arousing the people. (Acts 5:33ff). A certain Pharisee named Gamaliel suggested that the authorities should not become unduly alarmed in this case,

However, Our Lord did initiate the Catholic Church. And, as she grows within the world, we, at a later date, can see with progressive clarity her radical social implications. Whether Our Lord Himself understood all these implications potentially inherent in His Church, is of relatively small consequence. We ourselves may no more than infer the actual extent of His scientific human knowledge in social and economic matters. His knowledge in this regard may be presumed to have been as limited as all that of His age and time. However, it suffices that He founded a Church having such implications. It is also a matter of record that this Church was in fact, as if by a Divine Providence, kept from attempting too soon in world history that kind of social revolutionary attack for which, by her essential nature she was, and still is, equipped and prepared. At too early a period in her history any attempted revolutionary attack upon her environment would certainly have proved abortive. But it is of minor importance whether the Church was prevented from this too early attempt through a lack of sufficient human knowledge—by reason of which Our Lord made no attempt to point the Church immediately in the direction of a revolutionary attack upon the world—or whether Our Lord Himself did in fact see the future issue and refrained, for scientifically tactical reasons, from thus pointing her too soon in this direction. The important thing is that the Church has in fact been inhibited from attempting her revolutionary task, her intensive and scientifically directed social efforts, until she has grown to sufficient strength and until the world's historical times are ripe for it. It now suffices that the Church which Our Lord founded was actually equipped from the beginning for a revolutionary undertaking when some day her essential nature as the organ of the Divine Order, over against the disorder of the world, should inescapably require her to undertake this task.

since other insurrections had already been recently attempted and had come to nothing. Gamaliel mentioned one led by Judas of Galilee "in the days of taxing, who rose up and drew much people after him: he also perished and all, even as many as obeyed him were dispersed." He recalled the like fate of a certain Theudas, together with four hundred odd adherents. In other words, Palestine was not unused to what we should call the method of the political "putsch." Neither Our Lord nor His disciples were ever drawn into this kind of attempted direct action.

In the light of our available evidence, it would seem that Our Lord's Second Coming might be expected when the re-created accomplishments of the Incarnation Process, living and growing within the world, shall present a sufficient foundation of natural perfection to warrant, without further addition, their final consummation within the eternal Kingdom of God. It is then that time shall cease and our natural world, having fulfilled its purpose, shall also cease to be. However, does this imply that, before we may expect the Parousia, a moment shall arrive in which Our Lord's earthly Kingdom shall have succeeded completely, or, at any rate, very nearly completely, in taking the whole contemporaneous world of natural humanity out of fallen disorder into the perfection of His Incarnate humanity? In this connection it should be remembered that the total fruits of the Incarnation Process are much greater and richer than can be judged from the visible accomplishments of that Process, as these may appear at any one moment of history. The content of Our Lord's re-created Kingdom, as this is being prepared for His eternal consummation, has been progressively enriched by every holy life throughout the whole history of that Kingdom here on earth. Every offering—every "interim offering," to employ our previous expression¹²—presented by the Faithful upon the Church's Altars in the past as well as in the present, thus received out of time's destroying power into the eternity of Our Lord's Body and Blood, must be thought of as "filling up"¹³ the content of the total new creation which will one day be found adequate for ultimate consummation in the Parousia. Every saintly action, every contribution of acceptable prayer, every heroic sacrifice, every newly ordered social structure which has achieved anything of a human social justice and true brotherhood according to God's will, even though these achievements may have emerged in the actual time process of the Church's history only to vanish again from human eyes, must be thought of as definitely entering into the total of the Church's accomplishments. These historical accomplishments do not, of course, accrue in worldly history, but they

¹² P. 252.

¹³ Col. 1:24.

are cumulative by virtue of having been sacramentally offered to Our Lord. They might, therefore, conceivably present a sufficient foundation for Our Lord's Parousia, even while the actual picture presented by His earthly Kingdom at its final moment of time might appear very meagre indeed in its own contemporaneous content. The Divine Vine, growing in the surrounding disordered soil of a still far from completely redeemed world, might conceivably conclude its temporal life under the appearance of the tiniest of plants; yet the fruits born in previous ages of its growth might nevertheless have come, in their Sacramental totality, to warrant the eternal consummation of the Vine's temporal creative work.

For these reasons, therefore, no man may presume to have complete and exact knowledge as to just when the new creation of Our Lord's Incarnate humanity, on the level of this natural world, may be found sufficient and acceptable for His consummation and the taking of it into super-nature and eternity.¹⁴

Nevertheless, it would seem not only fitting and appropriate, but perhaps likely, that before the end of time the long history of the developing Kingdom upon the earth should bear the full flower of an earthly social order re-created in the *social* image of God. It would seem appropriate for the reception of the Ascended Lord, returning with power and great glory, that the new Order of the Incarnation might at long last spread to recreate the entire world, in such wise that, in its redeeming growth, it might become coterminous with human society as a whole and might engulf all of the contemporary human race.¹⁵

¹⁴ Our Lord Himself did not definitely know this, as He plainly says. Certain theologians have puzzled themselves with the problem. It has been suggested, for example, that the earthly Kingdom must continue until the number of the Saints which have matured within it shall equal the number of the angels who fell from heaven in the hosts of Lucifer. This suggestion seems to come from a source which views Christianity as an affair of individualistic piety and salvation. In any event, it does not take us far in the direction of setting a date for the Parousia.

¹⁵ It may be recalled in this connection that Our Lord's individual humanity was full grown, well-rounded and mature within the world of nature before the final transubstantiation of that humanity into the Substance of His Risen Life. That Humanity which rose from the grave and which now resides "at the right hand of the Father," had come to the full peak of its vital perfection in this world before the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension took place. It

Therefore, it may well be true even now that if our own faith were sufficiently single, self-forgetting and uncompromising, the Second Coming and the consummation of the Kingdom might indeed be "just around the corner." Our Lord's words come again to us: "Verily I say unto you that this generation shall not pass away until all be fulfilled." The "this generation" of the promise may be that one which after these long ages and in a newly preparing fullness of time¹⁶ shall in very fact be found faithful in pressing to their logical conclusions the social implications of the Kingdom of God.

This new fullness of time which may be maturing within the contemporary world situation may consist in the present facts of man's extraordinarily well-developed scientific technique for the control of his physical environment, and in his relatively well-advanced knowledge of economic and social processes. Man's progress in these two fields has provided two striking potentialities for a rational and scientific making over of the world which, until recently in world history, have been relatively lacking and which were indeed completely lacking in Our Lord's own day. The first of these potentialities is that for the production of the material necessities of life in such assured quantities that every man, woman and child on the face of the earth not only does not need to lack for any of them, but might, if scientific technique were fully utilized, actually receive a large abundance of facilities for healthy and happy living. The second is that our understanding of social and economic processes, together with our technical facilities for individual and mass education and leadership within the framework of those processes, have also been enormously advanced. It begins to

would seem reasonable to look for a redeemed social extension of His humanity, spreading to a parallel vital maturity in this world, before Our Lord's return and before the end of world history. St. Peter, in alluding to the Second Coming, says (Acts 3:21), "The heavens must receive (the Ascended Lord) *until the times of the restitution of all things.*" This "restitution" is usually interpreted as applying to the consummated Kingdom of God, as it shall be after the Parousia. Is it not at least possible, however, that we have here, instead, a hint that "the heavens must contain" Our Lord, until such time that His disordered creation may be wholly restored, on the level of nature, into the order of His humanity? Only after that preliminary restitution would the Parousia be possible.

¹⁶ Gal. 2:4; Eph. 1:10.

appear as if a rationally guided radical change in our social and economic systems might be attempted with a reasonable degree of confidence that it could be guided in a given desired direction. If this is true, Catholics may well be in a position hopefully to work for the setting up of new systems which will function normally and at the same time provide human behavior outlets and human relationships something like those demanded by the ethics of the Kingdom of God. At the least, we may have a good hope of achieving behavior patterns of daily experience infinitely better than those which are found in our contemporary chaotic and haphazard systems and now forced upon all men and women who are caught inextricably within the present economic and social net.

At the same time it has to be admitted that although men possess these material and rational potentialities for the ushering in of a Catholic revolution and the guiding of it toward a true fulfilment, it is also fairly certain that the display of any such uncompromising intention on the part of the faithful members of the Church will bring them into violent conflict with a furiously resisting surrounding world. It will even bring them into conflict with much of the "official" Church. Nevertheless, a radical cultural revolution, comprising in its scope the economic, social and political structures of the Church's worldly environment, seems essential if the Church is to recapture her own proper organic integrity, and is to complete the work of redeeming her environment into her growing, living organism. For, at present the Church languishes for a grave lack of adequate environmental materials, both intellectual and practical, suitable for appropriation into the Incarnation Process. The Church is like a vine which tries to grow in dry sand and salt. And the possibility of the successful outcome of a radical social attack upon the world, which appears to inhere in the present world situation, seems almost to force Catholics to conclude that the Church should apply herself in this very age, whether opposition be violent or otherwise, to her final vocation as a Church Militant, to her ultimate human vocation, that of revolutionizing the world according to the pattern of the Incarnation of God's Son.

XVII

THE INCARNATION AND THE WORLD'S VIOLENCE

WHEN any group or body of Catholics begins to consider the problem of militant revolutionary attack upon the world, there arises immediately an accompanying problem concerning those methods and tactics which are permissible to them. For one thing, violence and force are to be avoided, if this is possible. The reason for this may be found in the fundamental Catholic doctrine concerning the nature of man. Man is a rational animal, and if his free reason be violently overruled or constrained by force, even though force be employed to obtain a good end, he is rendered something less than human, in so far as that violence and force prevail. Overruling violence may be either in the form of social, economic or physical constraint, or it may be applied in the form of a lying and misleading propaganda. In either case, to force man into an action in which his free reason is prevented from as full a cooperation as is proper to it, is to damage his true nature at its highest point. This is precisely why, as we have already seen, God's method of the re-creation of the world is that of the extending Incarnation of His Son, which invites, but never compels, man's allegiance to its new order. Therefore the Church's method of trying to bring about radical social and economic changes within her environmental world must be based upon an appeal to human reason. Catholic methods must be educational and informative. There must be persuasion through intelligent presentation of the aims and plans for a new society, in such wise that men and women, even apart from Christianity, may understand them and may find them sufficiently desirable to wish to achieve them. Men and women must be shown that, using our present techniques and our present facilities for production, they are bound to be both materially better off and then, as material justice and order liberate them for other matters, culturally better off,

in an economic system based upon the principles of the Incarnation.

It may here be added that there should be nothing to surprise us in this. Therefore these truths should be urged as an initial and cogent propaganda. After all, Our Lord fed the multitudes before He preached to them.¹ He also said categorically that if we really were to seek, as a primary goal, the establishment of His Kingdom upon a basis of His justice, then every material need, "what we should eat and what we should drink and wherewithal we should be clothed," would, as a matter of course, be abundantly supplied.² The sayings of Our Lord are very clear upon this point. Therefore there is every reason for urging these material motives in order to convince the world, in advance, of the desirability for economic and social change in the direction of a truly Catholic economy.

Those who work for a Catholic social order must also work with means which go beyond mere education, propaganda and persuasion. They must seek to organize men and women for political, social and economic action. They must seek also to take advantage of every current and movement of the day which in any hopeful degree would seem to be aiming in their desired direction. And this kind of work within the world, as well as every offer of cooperation with the world's own movements toward social change, is bound to give rise to additional questions about the means to be employed to gain certain ends. For example, the organization of the laboring masses in union activity holds out great promise of being a principal force in the fight for economic justice. Nevertheless, organized labor sometimes finds itself in violent conflict with those entrenched economic powers which, in the interest of a wider justice, it is attempting to alter or even to overthrow. If it is a Christian principle that violence and force are evil, the question arises whether Christians must always withdraw their participation from movements in their environmental world at precisely that point at which peaceful persuasion leaves off and what is called open violence intervenes.

¹ Mark 6:37.

² Matt. 6:33.

This is not the place for an extended discussion as to just how far a Catholic is justified in permitting himself to be involved in the world's violence, when he discovers himself becoming so involved by the normal development of environmental situations with which he is cooperating. The problem must, however, be briefly faced, because Christians are sometimes suspected of shrinking from violence in secular action on dogmatic and absolute grounds. On the other hand, those outside the Church who are interested in social change today, while almost without exception³ they disclaim the use of violence and force as either useful or desirable in their normal tactics, nevertheless do not shrink from violence in particular situations, provided it does seem tactically necessary. For example, Communists and Socialists alike seek to bring about those economic changes which they desire by educating the masses of the people concerning their desirability, through the use of the legitimate ballot, and through democratic pressure upon ruling classes and governments. On the other hand, once a given change—or even a partial change—is accomplished, neither Communist nor Socialist, we may suppose, would refrain on doctrinaire or dogmatic grounds from forcefully defending a newly established economic organization, if this were to be violently attacked by surviving adherents of the supplanted older order who might thus seek to get themselves into power again. We may learn from history, both contemporary and past, that the forces of economic reaction and of the *status quo* hardly ever fail to counter-attack violently upon a regime which supplants them, provided they think that this is really necessary for the maintenance of their actual existence, and provided they believe they have the power to make the counter-attack effective.⁴ Further-

³ E.g., certain Anarchists are one exception to the general rule. Communists, contrary to some popular notions, are not.

⁴ Reactionary forces are sometimes exceedingly reckless in their counter attacks. They do not always make sure of their adequate strength. We can only conclude that there are many conservatives within every revolutionary situation who would actually rather be killed off in violent conflict than permit themselves and their kind to be peacefully eliminated from the social and economic order by the legitimate operation of the majority votes of their fellow men. To this fact the costly failures of the Capitalist counter-attacks upon the Russian revolutionary masses in the early days of the Socialist Revolution bear eloquent witness.

more, in many situations of vastly lesser import, as for example, in organized labor strikes, which are far from being immediately revolutionary in intention, the employers of labor often either provoke violence or even deliberately use it in order to defeat a labor union aim. If Christians are found cooperating in situations which involve violent conflict on either a great or a small scale, the question arises as to whether or not they must condemn violence under any and all conditions and therefore always withdraw from situations in which it appears. The non-Christian environment of the Church sometimes suspects that Christians will adopt this latter view. Men and women of the secular world who have no moral or dogmatic scruples against the use of violence when it is considered tactically unavoidable, sometimes fear that Christians, who cooperate so long as things go peacefully, will nevertheless leave them in the lurch whenever any violence whatever comes into view.

Catholics should therefore make it clear that they are not opposed in principle to participation in violent situations which may develop within their still unredeemed or only partially redeemed environmental world. In the Catholic view, violence may be defined in very general terms as any kind of constraint or overruling of the free rational mind of man by his fellow men. Such constraint may be effected by physical or any other means. It is always a variety of violence. In a completely redeemed and re-created world, a world in which a perfected Process of Incarnation had become coincidental with the whole of human society, it is very clear that violence would have no place. In this limiting case, however, it would not be exactly correct to say that an overruling of man's rational freedom would be forbidden or prohibited. It would be truer to say that violence could not possibly arise. There could be no occasion for constraint in a society in which perfectly redeemed men and women were freely and continuously giving their cooperative allegiance to Our Lord within a social expression of His humanity which had come at last to take all the world into its own functional wholeness. In a state of affairs such that the Catholic social organism had succeeded in perfecting all its environment into itself, violence would be absent, as one might

say, by definition. Surely a Catholic can hold, and with much better reason even than Marxists, that the human political state, which is the necessary organ of human constraint in a still disordered world, would "wither away" in very fact if a perfected Church commanded the equally perfect rational and free allegiance of all men. Whether this kind of complete re-creation of the world upon the natural level will ever be accomplished before the end of history, we may not know for certain. Catholics must work for it not only as if they thought it might be possible but as if it were to be expected. But in the meantime, particularly while we remain obviously very far from that goal, no Catholic can expect to find any absolutely perfected quality of a completely redeemed world, present in all its purity, within a worldly environment which remains terribly disordered. In other words, whenever a Catholic chooses a course of action within a world of disorder, even though that action be calculated to lead to an improvement in its disordered state, it is never possible to act in a way completely in accord with the principles of the perfected Kingdom of God. *Choices of action in a world of disorder can never be between a course of action which is bad and another which is absolutely good.* In the disordered world choices always lie only between two or more actions all of which are to some degree disordered and therefore evil. An action in the world has always to be chosen not because it is perfect, but because it is seen to be the least evil of all other possible actions within a given situation. Christians will go seriously astray if they imagine that the standards of Our Lord's perfection can be applied completely in situations which are themselves not yet perfected according to those standards. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect"⁵ is an injunction which is applicable *absolutely* only to men and women living in a world which has itself been rendered completely perfect.

These considerations throw a clearer light upon the question as to whether Christians must always withdraw from violent situations. Actually, every situation which arises in the environmental world of the Incarnation, every action and process

⁵ Matt. 5:48.

within that world, will always be found to contain elements of violence. To make absolute distinctions between forms of violence, saying, for instance, that physical violence is intrinsically more evil than any other variety, is highly arbitrary, and has no basis in the Catholic view of the nature of the fallen world and the necessary methods entailed in the redemption process. If, for example, certain factory workers, while on strike, attempt physically to interfere with other workers who would substitute for them on their jobs, violence may result. Catholics could scarcely give unqualified recommendation to such action in advance. However, in judging the relative evil of this, if it does happen to occur in a certain situation, a Catholic must always consider the alternatives. He must ask, for example, whether, if the strike had not been called at all, the workmen in the factory would not have been subjected to a worse violence, in this case that of subjection to economic injustice which, if it were allowed to persist, could be considered an element of disorder in the world much worse than a little temporary physical violence on the picket lines. Similar considerations apply equally to much larger matters. If, as a further example, a revolutionary government, which shows signs of bestowing a new justice and freedom upon the inhabitants of a country, has succeeded in superseding an older and oppressive despotism, is it not right that it should defend itself by force against counter-revolution? To answer such a question Catholics must again judge as to which is the worse evil, a return to the older injustice and cruelties, or a violent elimination of those who would recall them. Both choices may lead to certain dreadful evils, but if there are no other choices, a Catholic must choose the lesser set of evils and then act upon this choice. The decision must therefore be based upon intellectual analyses within a given situation. There are no absolute rules in practical Christian morality which can be invoked in order to give easy shortcuts to solutions of such difficulties.

In the case of international war, it might be argued with considerable cogency that no series of events could conceivably be more horribly disordered, more diabolically evil in their material and spiritual effects, than those which inhere in the

developed methods of modern warfare. However, even in this extreme case, the problem is still intellectual, rather than exclusively moral. The alternatives to war have still to be weighed. One alternative might be the prospect of bondage, physical, intellectual, spiritual, for vast masses of the earth's population and extending into an indefinite future. It might still be argued that a century or more of such future bondage would be preferable to a war. It might be argued that the results of resorting to war in order to avoid a prospective bondage are certain to be worse in the end than would be the results of immediate submission. It may be that modern warfare, employed as a means to any goal whatever, defensive or offensive, destroys the very ends for which the intention is to use it. However, if Catholics decide against a resort to war in any given situation, it will be because it is impossible to attain a desired end through its use, or because the end desired is not at the moment sufficiently urgent or important to warrant a modern war as an alternative to relinquishing that end. War is not, then, avoided on doctrinaire pacifist grounds or because it is wrong *per se* in a way that no other course of action can possibly be wrong. It is not avoided because it is in itself in some way an absolute and ultimate evil. If it is avoided, it is because war is found to be a worse immediate evil than the evils which are entailed in the alternative course of action. And neither is the alternative course of action, for example voluntary submission to an enemy, itself absolutely good. It can be only relatively better. It is preferable only if it is found through careful and reasonable analysis to entail in the end less violence, less disorder, less evil than the hypothetical war.

The Catholic analysis of the relation of ends in view to the means chosen to attain those ends, must take account of the fact that every end, when it is once attained, also retains within itself many of the values or qualities of the means used in its attainment. Disorders which are introduced into the process of attaining an end, leave their mark on the sum total of the final accomplishment. Therefore, in so far as disorders or evils are present in the means to an end, by just so much is the end itself disordered and, therefore, at least partly vitiated.

Put in the Sacramental terms which we have already employed, this means that bread and wine placed upon the Altars of the Church can, in the last analysis, be completely perfected in advance of their reception by God in the Church's Sacrifice, only by the operation upon them of Our Lord Himself in His Atonement. A Catholic, however, is in duty bound, in all particular situations, to bring forward as nearly perfect offerings as he possibly can within the natural order, before he asks this further atoning work of Our Lord for their completer perfection. To take a concrete example, a certain group of Catholics might decide that that area of human relationships within which their lives were lived would be suitable for offering upon an Altar under the forms of bread and wine, only if a complete and democratic economic security and justice prevailed in some particular factory in which they happened to be employed. In so far as they were the victims of remediable injustice, their gifts of bread and wine at some particular Mass would contain within them, summed up within their origins and histories, unacceptable elements of evil. We are, of course, here supposing that these elements of evil are present in the workmen's offerings for reasons other than their own direct and immediate faults. Nevertheless, the entrenched injustices do detract from the workmen's offerings, because the evils, whether present through their individual faults or not, do exist in the lives out of which their bread and wine must be prepared. In so far as these hypothetical Catholics do their own very best, under the circumstances, to perfect their offerings, these will be accepted on a particular occasion by Our Lord through His Atonement. However, they can be accepted only on a condition. This condition is that those bringing forward these offerings shall return to the world vowed to improve the quality of subsequent offerings, the bread and wine for the next week's Mass, that of the next month, or that of the next year.

Working for this improvement of bread and wine will entail working for greater justice, greater security, greater individual freedom, it may be, for all those employed in a particular industrial plant. This will probably involve the forming of labor unions, collective protests against abuses, demands for

higher wages, it may be, or other still more radical objectives. If such demands are granted by those in power, well and good. Better bread and wine will have been obtained, at least in some measure, without resort to what is called violence. But if a strike is called, and those in power counter this move by provoking violence, the Catholic employees will have to ask the following question: "Next month, when we go to Mass, which of the courses of action now open to us will provide us with the best bread and wine for our offerings? Which is the better quality of bread in the natural order? That which is taken out of that world of injustice and insecurity which will now once more supervene if we make no resistance to our employers' threatened violence? Or that which will be brought to the Altar out of our world considerably improved by the success of our present strike, but in which a certain amount of physical violence has accrued?" The workers must decide between bringing forward bread which continues to be prepared under conditions of injustice, and bread which is prepared under conditions of greater economic justice, but with a certain amount of overt violence incorporated into the history of its preparation.

It may be replied that, in the presence of threatened violence, it would be better for the striking workmen to go back to work under conditions of injustice and then to move more slowly, by persuasion and propaganda, toward an improvement in their working conditions. Let us suppose that the same end could be obtained in five years' time without any violent resistance to repressions, that could be obtained in a month's time, if such violence were permitted. Here again, however, the same kind of analysis and the same kind of choice has to be made. The offerings of these workmen at the end of five years of gradual movement toward their desired economic aims, may contain within them a history of slowly improving quality. However, they may also contain elements of wasted lives, undernourished childhoods, human frustrations and despairs of many sorts, which would have been absent from offerings brought forward after a month of more or less direct violence. And a month of violence might mean that the offerings at the end of another five years would be almost immeasurably improved.

It is clear, therefore, that Catholics have to consider the quality of both means and ends, in making their judgments about any line of action within their environmental world. A thoroughly good end can never be attained by a thoroughly bad means of arriving at it. Ends always contain their means summed up within them. A Catholic may never hold, without a careful and searching qualification, that "the end justifies the means" in any case whatever. On the other hand, he will beware of refraining entirely from going after an end which is seen to be desirable within his environmental world, simply because the means of getting it are not completely good, in some absolute sense. Absolutely good means are clearly not available in a world which is only in process of being perfected and which is still very far from perfect. Therefore, in every choice of action, Catholics must, as it were, cast up a balance sheet. Their aim must always be to leave the world, at the end of every action, somewhat nearer to the order which the Kingdom of God requires for its own further purpose. This implies that if a certain end is desirable in a given case, the means adopted to gain it shall not, in the course of its attainment, pile up a series of disorders which, when we consider the history of the action summed up as a whole, overbalance the improvements contained in the end itself when it is finally achieved.

But it must also be borne in mind that Catholics are nevertheless bound to push forward toward the attainment from out the world of an ever more and more perfected bread and wine even though, as we have emphasized, this requires what is called the revolution of the world. It is to the disordered world's great advantage to pretend that almost all the means necessary for obtaining the improvements required for the spreading of the Incarnation, contain elements of evil which Catholics must avoid at all costs. Catholics have all too often been ready to accept this suggestion at its face value. It is time that they realized that a considerable number of difficulties and evils, such as for example, violence in strikes, or even defensive wars for the maintenance of justice for the masses, which are almost certain to arise during any positive attacks upon the Church's environmental world, may be more spectacularly distressing than

they are profoundly evil. Bread brought to the Altar from a civil war waged in the interests of the maintenance and speedy advancement of a true human justice, might very well be more easily further perfected for the Holy Sacrifice within Our Lord's Atonement, than could bread brought in from a "peaceful" world in which injustices and human oppression were acquiesced in, with a deadening prospect of their continuance for years to come.

Therefore, in working to reshape and re-order the relatively chaotic elements of the Church's environmental world, Catholics are compelled to subject both the immediate goals which they seek in every particular situation, together with the means which they propose to use in attaining those goals, to a careful analysis. The means which are finally chosen must certainly be as close to the standards of the ethics of Our Lord's Kingdom as it is possible to have them within a situation which is still partially or entirely outside of that Kingdom. But in making this analysis, Catholics must bear in mind that there are no means whatever available within the world which are perfect according to those standards. They must therefore guard themselves from being reduced to complete and impotent inaction, simply because of this undeniable latter fact. The world must be changed, altered, re-created. Plans for action in the world must be continually made. Ends and objectives must be set up which are closer to those required by the Kingdom than are the economic and social arrangements at present found in the world. And Catholics must seek to press forward to these improved goals, utilizing to their purpose those means which will least vitiate the desired ends, when once they have been wholly or partially attained.

In a final chapter we shall consider some of those economic and social relationships, and some of those habitual human behavior patterns, which we should expect to find appearing within a world which was in process of being successfully re-ordered after the requirements of Our Lord's Kingdom. It is through such considerations that Catholics may find guidance in planning their immediate practical objectives for changes within a world which is still very remote from this further goal.

Such considerations should also assist us in singling out those contemporary secular movements and tendencies to which we may most hopefully ally ourselves, for the reason that they appear the most reasonable and available means of approaching those objectives. It can, however, be stated in advance, and as a general principle, that there is one class of objectives within the world which are forbidden to Catholics. No Catholic may seek his own advantage or advancement solely on the world's terms. In other words, no Catholic is permitted to seek what is called "success" or a career, which he plans to achieve through uncritical or passive acceptance of the world's disorders during the achieving process. A practicing Catholic, worthy of that high calling, will always be seeking the downfall of the world, so long as the world remains unredeemed and outside the Incarnation. He may be "wise as a serpent." He may seek, in certain contexts, to find a place of advantage in the world, in order the better to attack and to overthrow it. He may not, however, seek to retain such advantages, if by so doing he must also seek to retain the disorders upon which they rest. And, as a matter of fact, advantages in the world always do rest upon its disorders. There is no escape from this hard fact. To hold fast to the world's advantages is to serve mammon.⁶ No Catholic may set up as a primary objective either "what he shall eat, or what he shall drink; nor what he shall put on."⁷ He must work primarily for the Catholic Revolution, even though, in the end, this cost him his life. For whosoever seeks primarily to save his life in the world shall lose it to all eternity.⁸ Such are the difficult implications of the Catholic attack upon the world's disorders, and such are almost sure to be the difficult consequences of true Catholic action within the world. It is only when we shall have indeed brought the world into the order of the Kingdom of God that the good things of life shall also be abundantly added and bestowed upon those who act consistently according to the Kingdom's principles. In the meantime, those who fight for the Kingdom must abandon the idea of material success as

⁶ Luke 16:13; Matt. 6:24.

⁷ Matt. 6:25.

⁸ Matt. 16:25.

a primary goal.⁹ In the world as it is, it is quite literally harder for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.¹⁰ A disordered world will never give riches to one who affronts both it and everything which it continues to prize. *Secure* riches must be accepted on the world's terms, and this is *not* to work for the justice of the Kingdom.

As a matter of fact, those who now fight for the Kingdom must be prepared not only to embrace poverty, but also the prospect of being killed. To this idea every Catholic must discipline his thought in advance. He can take courage, as far as his individual self is concerned, from Our Lord's words: "Who-soever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."¹¹ This is the sure promise to all who lay down their lives in the coming struggle for Our Lord's justice. And there is additional joy in the knowledge that to the children and the children's children of those who now seek first the Kingdom of God and in this world die for it, there shall be added all of that abundance out of the world's almost infinite store of good things, which is now denied to the great masses of Our Lord's fellow men, because His justice is not yet achieved.¹²

It now remains to add that Catholics believe that they are in possession of certain potent means of working for the re-creation of the world, which are lacking to those who refuse to enter the Process of the Incarnation. Ultimately, it is the Divine Logos, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, incarnate in the humanity of Jesus Christ, who accomplishes the world's re-creation. Members of that humanity extending itself in the world can serve as bearers of Our Lord's redeeming action, provided they work within the world not in their own right or as if they were individual sources of a redeeming power, but only in so far as they became incorporated into Our Lord's life. In the last analysis, the work of the world's redemption is ac-

⁹ At present, individual Communists are in the same kind of position.

¹⁰ Mark 10:25.

¹¹ Matt. 16:25.

¹² This is a compensating hope which Catholics also share with Communists. Catholics, however, know in addition that their present achievements have value in eternity, and that in this eternity they themselves have a personal living part. This is a knowledge which orthodox Communists, unfortunately, do not share.

complished by Our Lord. Individual Catholics can "work" for the Incarnation of the world only in so far as they serve as willingly cooperating instruments of that redeeming power which flows from Our Lord. "I am the vine, ye are the branches," He said.¹³ "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."

The continuing means whereby Catholics must thus remain abiding in Our Lord and He in them, are the means of prayer.¹⁴ This is why prayer is so central in the Catholic life. This is why Christians are told that they must pray without ceasing.¹⁵ In the end, it is only through men and women who pray, who abide in Our Lord through prayer, that His re-creating power will be fully liberated and completely implemented in His work within the world.

This must not be construed as implying that the method of prayer supersedes, still less, replaces, all other means which Christians must use to implement Our Lord's redeeming power. As has been pointed out, Catholics must also attempt to direct all the world's available means to gain whatever immediate ends the extension of the Incarnation may require at any particular time and place. Prayer does not replace, but rather crowns and makes effective all other legitimate plans and actions in the world. Men are required to use their intellectual and other natural capacities to the utmost. If prayer be resorted to in order to supplant, rather than to crown these capacities, in order to relieve men of effort in the natural order, rather than to liberate a supernatural power within those efforts which will carry them beyond the natural into the supernatural order, then prayer is in danger of lapsing into the realm of magical practice. The saying "God helps those who help themselves," although sometimes taken upon cynical lips, does in fact, if rightly interpreted and rightly applied, express a profound and

¹³ John 15:5.

¹⁴ For the purpose of this discussion, it may be objected that all Christians, rather than specifically Catholic Christians, share this belief. Unfortunately, there are many men and women now alive who would claim the name of Christian, but who would either deny what is called the "efficacy of prayer," or else would interpret the idea of prayer in "psychological," subjective, or other categories almost totally alien to the ancient Catholic understanding of the matter.

¹⁵ I Thess. 2:13.

necessary truth. All power is ultimately from God, but the power of the Incarnation crowns man's best and finest efforts in the natural order. The prayers of the Faithful are one of the principal channels of this crowning power of Our Lord.

Prayer, then, is a means of attack upon the disorders of the world, which not only complements but, in its potentiality of liberated Divine power, goes infinitely beyond any such means which are available solely within the natural order itself. But there is another and highly practical method of action peculiar to the Process of the Incarnation, which Our Lord alone has made available to the members of His body in the world. This is the method of the Cross.

No event of history has been so little understood by the great majority of mankind as has the well-authenticated event of Our Lord's Crucifixion. At the same time, the principle of conduct, the method of dealing with the world, which it seems to imply, has been widely and emphatically rejected. It has been variously characterized as impractical, stupid, weak or even intolerable. The implications of the Cross are, as St. Paul said, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness.¹⁶ To the apostles of power in our own day, the Cross is a hateful and dangerous scandal, a potent source of degradation to the human race.¹⁷

In reply to the world's misunderstanding and rejection of it, it is necessary to assert that Our Lord's Crucifixion was neither a weak capitulation to His enemies, nor an empty and tragic cutting short of what promised otherwise to be a long and increasingly useful life. In the Crucifixion God triumphed; not the world. And in the power of that triumph, Catholics have had bestowed upon them a final means of overwhelming the world's resistance. They have had placed in their hands a weapon against which the savage and disordered world cannot successfully arm itself. They possess a method of attack which the world can continue to resist only to its own eventual perdition.

¹⁶ I Cor. 1:23.

¹⁷ *E.g.*, to a Nietzsche, a Swinburne, a Mussolini, a Goebbels or an Alfred Rosenberg.

The Cross, properly understood, is no passive submission to the world's hostile attacks. There is nothing supine about the Cross. Neither is it adequately described merely as the brave submission to calamity, found in certain situations to be inevitable; nor is it the quiet but heroic bearing of suffering and death, from which it has been discovered there is no honorable method of escape. Men and women have suffered and died bravely for multitudes of noble causes. They have uncomplainingly borne the pains of illness and have calmly faced natural death. They have been found nobly resolute in the presence of those frustrations and privations which are universally present among all sorts and conditions of men within the world of nature. It is not necessary to be a Christian to show oneself nobly ready to die for a chosen cause. It is not necessary to be a Christian in order to submit bravely to unavoidable deprivations and sufferings, or to death. The natural courage of mankind can often rise to these great heights. Our Lord's Cross implies something infinitely more than this.

We can begin to understand Our Lord's Crucifixion only when we begin to see it as a planned and positive accomplishment. And first, we must note that Our Lord did not need to be crucified apart from his own decisive choice. Nothing compelled Him to permit Himself to be done to death by the hostile ruling classes of the Jews who dwelt in Jerusalem. Nothing external to His own will forced Him to go upon His final and fateful journey to that city. Neither did He go in ignorance of what was about to happen there. He prophesied clearly to His disciples that He would certainly be arrested and then be judged and killed.¹⁸

Furthermore, in many another dangerous situation, in the midst of hostile and infuriated crowds, He had previously saved Himself from being murdered.¹⁹ Even as late as Maundy Thursday evening, the very day before His Crucifixion, He made sure that His disciples should carry swords with them, in order to defend Himself and His company from the attacks of possible marauders, or of an all too possible government-hired assassin,

¹⁸ Matt. 16:21.

¹⁹ *E.g.*, in the incidents recorded in John 8:59; Luke 4:29-30.

as they went together out beyond the safe walls of Jerusalem to spend the night after the Last Supper praying at the Mount of Olives in the Garden of Gethsemane.²⁰ It is therefore also reasonably clear that Our Lord never had the least intention of permitting Himself to be killed, except under special circumstances, circumstances in some sense carefully prepared and chosen by Himself. For on other previous occasions of danger He repeatedly saved Himself from attack, and, by implication at least, He was ready to defend Himself even by the sword, when, on His last night on earth, He walked along the dangerous country roads outside the Jerusalem city walls. On all these occasions He saved Himself because, as St. John asserts, "His hour was not yet come."²¹

We may therefore conclude that the Cross by no means implies a dogma of universal giving-in in the presence of any and all violence. It means, instead, submission to murderous violence *only under particular circumstances*. The Cross implies submission to suffering incurred both at an appropriate time and within a well-matured situation. And the intention which lies behind such submission within such circumstances, makes all the difference between the acceptance of the Cross and the bearing of every other kind of adversity, suffering or death.

In order to incur the danger of persecution or even of death at the hands of their environmental world, Catholics must behave toward it in such a way as to infuriate it. Our Lord Himself certainly did this. He criticized, He denounced, He flouted the corrupted traditions²² of His own nation and of His own co-religionists.²³ He uncovered their deep hypocrisies. He showed how their perversions of their ancient religion had come to be overlaid with a concealing veneer of respectable

²⁰ Luke 22:38. See Fr. Conrad Noel's remarks on this point, *Life of Jesus*, London 1937, p. 487.

²¹ John 7:30; 8:20. The Greek word here translated "hour," has the sense of "fateful hour," "strategic moment," "appropriate time."

²² Not the *true* traditions, correctly interpreted.

²³ Cf. John 7:6-7. Our Lord, speaking to certain members of His family, once remarked: "The world cannot hate you." He meant, apparently, that they were on good terms with the world's arrangements, and therefore perfectly at home within its disorders. Our Lord then adds: "But me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."

rationalizations.²⁴ He exasperated their constituted religious officers and authorities by the exalted claims which He made for His own office and His own authority. To the guardians of Jewish traditions and conventions, He seemed to raise the threat that He would supersede them. To those of pious reputation, He seemed to be pricking the bubbles of their vast complacencies. To the rich and prosperous, He seemed to be rousing the rabble to rob them of their wealth. To those who were powerful by dint of making their most precious religious precepts and their national scruples as God's Chosen People subservient to the continuing fact of a corrupt Roman overlordship, He seemed to be laying bare their precarious inconsistencies to the eyes of the common people, and to be endangering their cherished political positions.²⁵ Finally, with a spectacular and public gesture, He raised His own hands in physical violence against those who took commissions for changing money in the Temple, and against those who bought and sold within the confines of its most sacred precincts. With the common people already dangerously aroused, and with official fears and hatreds therefore at their highest pitch, how was it possible for the authorities to interpret this insolent bit of personal direct action as anything but a deliberate spark intended to set off a well-laid conflagration of social revolution? It is true, as we have already seen, that there is no evidence whatever that Our Lord Himself ever planned to initiate a social or political uprising in His lifetime. On the contrary, He seems definitely to have rejected all such ideas, both for Himself and for His immediate followers. Nevertheless, it hardly seems possible that He did not know that His use of what might be described as a "token violence" in the Temple, would lead the Jewish authorities to suspect that He quite certainly had this intention. Our Lord must have known that this spectacular act would go far to put the finishing touch upon the Jews' determination to kill Him. He must have known that this act, if

²⁴ *E.g.*, Mark 7:11-13.

²⁵ The Pharisees and Chief Priests in solemn council complained: "What do we? . . . If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation" (John 11:47-48) *i.e.*, would put an end to the puppet Jewish rule and would proceed to rule directly.

anything else was wanting, would ensure that Crucifixion which, at this appointed hour, He seemed at last determined to embrace. He was not disappointed in this. The Jewish authorities immediately responded with a condign determination to make way with Him before it should be too late.²⁶

The mystery of the Cross is both profound and terrible. Any facile or over-simplified analysis of it must, of all things, be avoided. With all reverence, however, we may point to two aspects of it which concern it as a method of dealing with the world. It is a method which Our Lord used when the world counter-attacked, as soon as He had completed the task of initiating the Process of the Incarnation. And because, as we have seen, He has opened the way of the Cross to all succeeding members of His Incarnation, it is a method which is to be used by all those who, in union with Him, seek to implement that Process throughout history.

First of all, we note that the aroused hostility of the world, which prepared the way for the Cross, was achieved by Our Lord solely through perfect obedience to God's will. And if His followers would unite their sufferings and persecutions and sacrifices to His, at any future day, they can succeed in doing this only in so far as they merit the world's displeasure for what are genuinely intended to be the same kinds of reasons.

There are plenty of ways, unfortunately, in which Catholics, in every age, may incur the dislike of their fellow men. Most of these ways are only very slightly, if at all, connected with the furthering of Our Lord's Kingdom. Human beings may get themselves disliked by their fellows because they are ungracious, or arrogant, or dishonest, or selfish. Men may be hated simply because, in the course of what is called normal business

²⁶ For a discussion of this incident, see Fr. Conrad Noel, *op. cit.*, pp. 455ff. St. John in his Gospel, puts the Cleansing of the Temple at a much earlier period of Our Lord's ministry than do the Synoptists, who put the incident at the end, just before His trial. It is entirely possible that there were two such incidents. If this is true, the earlier act, when Our Lord was relatively unknown and unimportant, would not have been so apt to alarm the authorities in the way the second one did. However, it is St. John who remarks especially upon the accompanying official alarm and fear. This may be an evidence that St. John's chronology is, in this case, not so reliable as that of the Synoptists. In any event, there is no reason to doubt that there was a Cleansing of the Temple as one of the culminating events of Our Lord's life.

and money-making, they have been forced to tread on other peoples' toes in the process. The disordered world is filled with hatreds and resentments against people who have done nothing worse than make successful careers for themselves, and who, in doing this, have behaved quite impeccably, according to the world's own standards. It is one of the most striking earmarks of a fallen and unredeemed world that the egocentric and self-regarding behavior which it requires on the part of its successful individuals,²⁷ practically always causes injury or, at the least, disappointment, to other individuals. This process has, in fact, so far matured that there are today whole class groups arrayed in suspicious hostility against other class groups. Catholics, as individuals, in large bodies, even as corporate parts of the visible Church, may easily enough find themselves set in the midst of hatreds which have their origins in any or all of the above or similar causes. Certainly, if they suffer or are killed on such accounts, they can by no means lay claim to a participation in the Cross.²⁸

The Cross can be achieved only if one of its components is hatred on the part of the environmental world of the Incarnation, aroused by hostility and fear in the presence of the encroaching perfection of the new order of Our Lord's Kingdom. To participate in the Cross, Catholics both as individuals and as a Church must first goad the world into a fury by the revolutionary threat of the Incarnation—and by this threat alone.

The other aspect of the Cross which concerns us here is the question of the time or the moment at which Catholics are called upon to take it up. Let us suppose that in a certain developing situation, Catholics are seeking to wrest at least something of the order of the Kingdom from the resisting disorders of their environmental world, and having made such a gain, are seeking also to maintain it against the world's counter-attacks. This is that normal activity by which Catholics seek to improve the bread and wine for their Sacrifice, both in quantity and quality. Having prepared a given offering, Catholics will,

²⁷ *E.g.*, the adoption of profit-making as a primary objective.

²⁸ It is one of the most unpleasant, not to say revolting, characteristics of a corrupt Church, that she often does make just this kind of false claim.

in general, try to prevent themselves from being, as it were, robbed of it. They will not, for one thing, permit their offering to be torn from them as they are on the very point of bearing it to the Altar. This means that they will, in some manner or other, seek to circumvent the world's counter-attacks, just as, let us say, Communists of today would seek to defend any revolutionary gains from reactionary counter-revolution. The question is then, when shall Catholics cease to try to circumvent the world with all the means at their legitimate disposal upon the natural level, and take up that supernatural means whereby the world is ultimately conquered by the method of the Cross? Some way of answering this question must be found, since it is clear from Our Lord's own example that the Cross is not to be accepted at any and all times, or under any and all circumstances. If the Cross were to be taken up before the critical time, before the "hour is come," it might turn out to be a tragic, a relatively empty, or even an arrogant gesture.

If we may judge from Our Lord's own choice of time in the case of His Crucifixion, it would appear that He avoided a catastrophic or violent ending of His life, until He had finished the particular task which was given to Him, as an individual, to do. Just before His Crucifixion, in His final prayer to God, He states this latter fact explicitly. Speaking in a manner of rendering account, as it were, of His earthly life to His heavenly Father, He said: "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."²⁹ This can only mean that He had done everything necessary, literally everything in the realms of action, precept and prayer, which needed to be done in order to give the Process of the Incarnation its perfected and completely adequate initiation. This being the case, any further work or gains in the world, any further extension of His activity or prolongation of His life, would not have been wholly on behalf of His Father's work, on behalf of the foundation of the Kingdom, but in some sense on behalf of Himself alone. The hour had thus arrived in which He was free to invite upon Himself the logical results of His completed attack upon the world. With His work for the Kingdom finished so far as He was individually con-

²⁹ John 17:4.

cerned as a human being, He was free to let Himself fall into the hands of the world.

The hour for the Crucifixion came, therefore, at the moment that His positive, active work within the world was perfectly accomplished. He then invited the world itself, as it were, to crown this work at the very moment that it imagined it was defeating everything which He had begun. He invited the world to a deed which would inevitably turn out to be the final undoing of that very disordered state to which the world was trying so desperately to cling. He stretched Himself upon the Cross; and the disordered world, as it drove the nails home, fell into a kind of Divine Snare. With every blow upon the nails, the world made the retention of its own disorders for itself utterly impossible. The Cross is the final and terrible tactic of God against the world. It is the ultimate Divine Violence; for at precisely the moment that the world would set its disorders in an impregnable position by crucifying their most dangerous and, in the last analysis, their only *fatal* enemy, these disorders are found overcome by the very creative power which the world had thought to destroy. In nailing Our Lord to the Cross, the world finally accomplished precisely the reverse of what it set out to do. It killed the Incarnate Son of God, but in so doing broke in pieces its own defenses against the power of that Incarnation. For the world's part, a Pyrrhic victory indeed! Our Lord, as the final and climactic Act of His earthly life, achieved His Crucifixion. But in doing this, He turned the world's own triumphant perversity into the crown and seal of that same world's ultimate re-creation and salvation.

The accomplishment of Our Lord Himself within the world, by which He aroused the world's hostility, and which He eventually succeeded in having crowned with His own death upon the Cross, was itself perfected at every point. None of us who come after Him may succeed in perfecting a similar accomplishment. At any rate, no such complete perfection has ever been achieved by any other man. Nevertheless, with their more or less faulty accomplishments in the world, perfected or, as is technically said, *atoned for* by Our Lord's continuing action, Catholics may, with all their failures, be permitted to use the

method of the Cross. And for every Catholic or group of Catholics, the Cross still implies the same two component elements which we have just been discussing, and which entered into Our Lord's own Crucifixion. First of all, those who would take up the Cross must be hated, and for the reason that they set forward the order of Our Lord's Kingdom within a resisting world, *and for no other reason*. That is, the world's hatred must be definitely achieved through simply doing the will of God within it. And secondly, the Cross must not be taken up too soon within any given developing situation. If it is, God's task may be left incomplete in that particular case. The Cross, as we have said, may be turned into a kind of perverse escape, a spectacular gesture, or an actually arrogant display. Catholics must guard themselves with discretion from the world's attacks until their particular appointed parts in setting forward the Kingdom are fulfilled. Then, when it is seen that further action, further clinging to wealth, position, power, or even to life, must turn out to be self-regarding rather than God-regarding—a situation which arises ultimately in the historical development of every Catholic task—that is the moment, that is the "hour" for Catholics to invite the world to have its seeming triumph, and to make the final sacrifice in union with the Cross.³⁰

It may be argued that a true judgment of this sort is exceedingly difficult to make. That is certainly the case, especially when we consider how apt is the natural man to identify his own personal glory with the glory of God. Yet it is a judgment which Catholics are called upon to make; and they are sufficiently equipped for the task, both through the light of their natural reason and by the grace of God's Holy Spirit in His Sacramental Church.

Finally, there is one particular difficulty which needs consideration. We have said that both life and effectiveness of positive

³⁰ Because the Cross has been established by Our Lord as an eternal fact, all innocent human anguish and loss, and ultimately every individual death, may be associated by Catholics, in an act of purposive oblation, with that Sacrifice. We may therefore believe that this kind of oblation of pain and death, even when these are not "achieved" but merely *happen* to individuals in the natural order, can add mystical, but no less powerful and practical elements to the whole Church's weapon of the Cross.

action should be guarded by Catholics from the world's destruction, until the hour of the Crucifixion is clearly come. This brings up again, from another slightly different approach, that same question concerning the legitimacy of violence, which we have discussed before. It may be argued that Our Lord, although He seems to have been prepared, on one occasion at least, to defend Himself with a violent method, yet He never actually came to doing this. He was always able to "withdraw Himself" or to "hide Himself,"³¹ and thus to extricate Himself from the midst of those who would have killed Him before His own hour. May His followers sometimes resort to violence, if they are convinced that their "hour is not yet come"?

An answer to this question would seem to lie once more in a consideration of the Process of the Incarnation as a living, growing organism, specifically in its relation to the disordered environment within which it grows. Strictly speaking, it would seem that the method of the Cross is completely applicable, applicable in a way which is "unmixed" with any other methods of conflict, only in situations in which the battle is clearly and uniquely drawn between the Organism of the Incarnation on the one hand, and the disordered environmental world on the other. Such an unmixed situation, however, has never been clearly present since the event of Our Lord's own Crucifixion. As the Incarnation has spread itself more and more in social extension in the world, it has become increasingly difficult for its individual members to separate sharply those of their actions which lie uniquely on the frontier between the Kingdom of God and the world, from those of their actions which lie wholly or partly outside that Kingdom, in that environmental region of the world which has not yet even reached its frontier. In other words, Catholics work to build up the Kingdom of God by taking the elements of the world into it. At the same time, as we have already seen, they work among elements still within the world, whenever it is possible to improve the quality of their order, and thus cause them to be somewhat less intractable when the time comes to incorporate them further into the Kingdom.

³¹ Matt. 12:15; Mark 3:7; John 8:59.

On the frontier between the Order of the Kingdom and the disorder of the world, Catholics must always be on the alert to embrace the Cross, not only as their most potent, but as their ultimate and final weapon against the world. What we have called the "Divine Snare" is still set before the world in every generation. It is committed to Catholics to spring this Trap, by getting themselves crucified whenever the time and place are come to an appropriate conjunction. On the other hand, Catholics may find themselves, more often than not, working in movements in their environmental world and with people who reject the method of the Cross. A situation might arise, for example, in which Catholics might find themselves in a revolutionary government which was being attacked by the armed forces of a corrupt reaction. The battle would here be developing not between the Kingdom of God and its environment, but rather between two different group orders in the environmental world. The Catholics in question have given their allegiance to that order—in this case that of the revolutionary government—which they think is better adapted for the Kingdom's future use than is the order of the reactionary group. It is quite open to them, even here, to try to persuade their non-Catholic fellows that a method analogous to the Cross might actually be a better tactic than militant and violent defense with guns and bombs. Non-Christians have already proved for us that what is called non-violent resistance, sometimes termed passive resistance, can be exceedingly formidable.³² However, such a method if adopted in a conflict entirely within the world, would not be, strictly speaking, the Cross, but only a practical method upon the natural level *analogous* to the Cross. The Cross is available only within the Incarnation.

Furthermore, in the foregoing hypothetical situation, it is more than likely that the Catholics' advice of non-violent resistance would be rejected by the defenders of the revolution. In this case, since the Catholics in question are already pledged to this definite work with the outside world, it is likely that

³² *E.g.*, the method of M. K. Gandhi in India. For an extensive and illuminating discussion of this problem, on a non-religious basis, Richard B. Gregg's *The Power of Non-Violence* should be read. Lippincott, Philadelphia 1934.

they will have to go along with their fellow non-Christians and, if the latter deem it necessary, assist in a violent defense against the anti-revolutionary attack. In this situation, Catholics may find their *individual* Crosses as they are wounded or killed for the sake of the future Kingdom, even though they now suffer upon a battleground within the outside world, and participate as individuals in a group resistance which itself falls short of the method of the Cross.

Entirely apart from any theoretical discussions of hypothetical cases, a glaringly ugly situation confronts us in the institutional Church of the present age. The Church has accumulated great wealth and properties in many lands. Also, in the aggregate, she wields a tremendous material power which is both economic and political. It cannot, of course, be said that all of this wealth and power is at present being used for thoroughly bad immediate ends. On the contrary, many of the Church's resources are used for purposes which, in themselves and so far as they go, are good. The Church has her schools and colleges and hospitals and social centres. She has her Church buildings, her shrines and centres of worship, her convents and her monasteries. The fact remains, however, that in few, if in any, of the Church's activities does she intend deliberately to offer a radical criticism, still less a serious immediate threat, to the established disorders of her environmental world. On the contrary, her educational institutions accept the *status quo* as a matter of course and defend it. Her hospitals and social agencies confine themselves to what might be called "ambulance work," caring for wounded behind the lines of un-Christian secular conflicts in which, with splendid neutrality, she supinely acquiesces. Her parishes and conventual establishments are almost completely given over to those pious practices which concern an individualistic salvation, to a religion of extrication from the world such as it has been the thesis of this book to decry.

The Church has thus fallen into the sad habit of clinging to her wealth and power for a purpose quite other than the revolutionary redemption of the world as a whole. She seems only to wish to be let alone, and she tends to use her material advan-

tages largely as a defense of abuses within herself which she ought, instead, to be attacking in her environment. She forgets that the Church Militant is not the Kingdom of God already realized, but is, instead, always the *Kingdom-in-the-making*. The Church is that region of the Kingdom visible in earth, which is in process of re-creating the disorders of fallen creation. In so far as the Church has confused this region of process with an actualized Kingdom, she has committed what Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr calls the "Catholic Heresy."³³ She has confused a means with an end, and a growing with a maturity. It is because of this confusion that she has attempted to establish herself as a citadel, as if she had already achieved a perfection which must be kept apart and defended from the world. She has tried to surround herself with a wall of wealth and power.

Hence it comes about that the Church at the present time is using her wealth and power not solely for the advancement of Our Lord's Kingdom, but rather in her own self-interests, wickedly confounding those self-interests with the interests of her Lord. At the moment these interests are far from being identical. So far has this evil eaten into the Church that she almost appears to use her religion in behalf of her material resources, instead of spending her material resources on behalf of her Lord. It is clearly time to call a halt to this. The hour for the Cross came long ago, and the Church failed to recognize it. However, even at this more than eleventh hour, it is not yet quite too late to take it up.

In fact, the Church must speedily choose between, on the one hand, experiencing a terrible punishment in which the best elements of the secular world, infuriated by her perversities, will turn upon her and themselves act as the agent of God's retributive justice, and on the other hand, arousing herself to the present opportunity of the Cross. She must suffer in either event. How much more glorious to suffer with her Lord! Therefore, let the Faithful within the Church once more begin a thoroughgoing attack upon the fallen world, and particularly upon those points at which its disorders have invaded the Church herself. Let them champion the causes of Divine Jus-

³³ *The Christian Century*, Dec. 8, 1937.

tice and Divine Love, though this threaten, as a revolutionary threat must, all the Church's power and wealth now established upon injustice and hatred within the present order. If the Church arouses herself to this, it is highly probable that ninety per cent of her nominal membership will drop away. Her faithful priests and laity will be persecuted by almost every authority, secular, lay and ecclesiastical. Her income will fall, her endowments, her beautiful buildings and ornaments will vanish in those very changes which she advocates and upon which she vigorously insists.

This will be Catholic force in action. This will be Christian violence. This will be militant Christianity. This will be warfare with the weapon of the Cross. It will be a strange warfare from a worldly point of view. There will be no bands to play or banners to fly upon the Church's march. "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem," said Our Lord.³⁴ The hour is come that faithful Catholics must both invite and embrace the violence of the world as did Our Lord Himself. The Church, with Him, must begin to stretch herself upon the Cross. She must place herself with Him on the under side of the nails. The world will not fail to drive them home as long ago it drove home other Nails. And now, as then, this will be to its own undoing. Therefore the Church must begin, again and quickly, her own journey to Jerusalem. That must be her present immediate objective, precisely because at Jerusalem there stands the Cross.

³⁴ Matt. 20:18; Mark 10:33; Luke 18:31.

XVIII

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A REDEEMED SOCIAL ORDER

WE COME now to the final, and, at the same time, the pleasantest part of our present enquiry. We have discussed previously and at some length¹ certain characteristics—the earmarks, as we call them—of a fallen and disordered world. Before we close, we must consider, at least briefly, some of the earmarks of a reperfected and redeemed human society.

At this point we are not concerned with drawing up a detailed description, or making advance blue-prints of that human social order which might, according to both revelation and reason, most nearly serve as the substantial natural foundation of the Kingdom of God. Neither are we here concerned in the outlining of imaginary Christian Utopias. The development of the constitution, as well as of the institutions, of a society redeemed within the Incarnation of Our Lord, must be worked out by men using to the full their free rational intelligence illuminated by God the Holy Spirit. Only the actual practice of the future can reveal the organizational arrangements of a wholly Catholic world. However, we possess now and in advance, much knowledge of the kinds of human relationships which the Incarnation demands. In the revelation flowing from Our Lord's humanity and through the guidance of His teachings, the Church from the beginning has had the necessary equipment for understanding the qualities of those human actions which are essential to, as well as those mutual attitudes which best become, a society corporately redeemed into the social image of God. The setting up of a practical society embodying these necessary qualities in human relationships, must be delegated to scientifically trained economists and sociologists, and to experienced administrators and statesmen. It should be

¹ Chap. III.

added, as has also been previously intimated,² that if they are to be adequate to their enormously far-reaching and varied task, such experts must themselves first be within the Incarnation Process and faithful members of the Body of Our Lord. And it is the theologians and philosophers of the Church who will give to these practical experts a qualitative picture of a redeemed society, to which, for their perfect guidance, they must in large outline adhere.

Furthermore, the Church can add something which no unaided man would dare express. The Church can say in advance that a redeemed world is, in principle, achievable.³ The members of Our Lord within His Incarnation know what the capacities of human nature actually are. The Church knows that the kinds of human relationships, the kinds of behavior, the kinds of social attitudes which the Incarnation implies, are not, as so many men of the world would like to insist, "impractical." She knows that redeemed men and women can be expected eventually to respond in enthusiastic action, if the opportunities for what may be called "redeemed behavior" are but made actually available to them in the normal everyday social practice of gaining a living. Therefore, upon the dogmatic basis of her Faith, and upon the basis of her revealed, as well as of her reasoned, knowledge of the nature of man himself, the Church can give to those whom the world might derisively call her revolutionary dreamers, the triumphant assurance of a final and very practical success.⁴ The Church knows, in addition, that a redeemed social order will not result automatically merely from the redemption of individual interior lives, but will necessitate a vigorous and intelligent action on the part of all the members of her body in social, economic, political, as well as intellectual, spheres—if Catholic interior perfections are some day to be expressed in social values. Therefore, it is high time that the Church bid her practical experts get on speedily with their revolutionary task.

² P. 124.

³ Our Lord said: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw *all* men unto me." John 12:32.

⁴ Based, for one thing, on Our Lord's own assurance, sealed in His Resurrection: "Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world!" John 16:33.

One of the chief notes of a Catholic social order will be the fact that within it ordinary men and women will gain their livelihoods, and will actually best serve their own material as well as spiritual interests, together with those of their near and dear ones, by behaving not as if the individual accumulation of material wealth were a primary objective, but in utter contradiction to this, by behaving so that their primary efforts shall be directed to the production of wealth for the community as a whole, and in such wise that the major portions of both their abilities and their strength shall be used directly in the service of society without any corresponding individual return being demanded as a measured reward for such self-giving. This is nothing more than a practical application of the dictum that "he that loseth his life shall find it." "Losing one's life" does not necessarily imply dying a martyr's death. Neither does "finding one's life" refer exclusively, after such a death, to entrance into the glory of heaven. Under circumstances of violent conflict with the world's disorders, while the Incarnation Process is still growing in the face of the world's resistance, it may mean both of these things. It probably will mean both of these things before many more years have passed. But in a redeemed society, the opportunity of "losing" individual lives to "find" them again in all the fullness of their redeemed potentialities within this world, should be available while men's earthly lives still endure and while physical vitality is still rich and abundant. Long before natural death, and indeed, throughout the whole of life in this world, men and women resident within the substance of the Kingdom of God which is still on the level of our creation, should be able to enter into the experience of complete self-giving to God, through complete self-giving to their fellow men. They should be enabled to do this within an appropriately ordered corporate social structure; and they should be able thus to experience here on earth a genuine foretaste of that ultimate self-finding which shall be actualized, in its consummated fullness, beyond the gate of natural death in the presence of the Beatific Vision and in the life of the world to come.

There are those who teach that this kind of self-giving is suf-

ficiently possible even now, within our present un-Christian Capitalist society. Those who believe this belong to that school of thought which imagines that our present economic order—and for that matter, any human social order whatever—will be “good,” if men and women are “good,” as individuals, within it. Now while it is certainly true that no economic order, no matter how well adapted it may be for Christian living, will in itself be “good” unless individuals are “good” within it, it does not by any means follow that individual “goodness” will necessarily redeem a bad economic order. On the contrary, really consistent and thoroughgoing Christian behavior within an un-Christian order is much more apt to destroy the latter than to improve it. Thus “Christian goodness” within an evil order is not palliative, but, as we have been pointing out all along, completely revolutionary.

The present Archbishop of York, in referring to our modern economy, once said⁵ that commerce is one of the factors that bring nations together. He asserted that “whether in doing so it promotes good will or ill, depends on whether we conduct it rightly or sinfully.” This statement, if carefully analyzed, is certainly correct; but if applied in practice, it would lead us much farther than most people who either make or accept this kind of pronouncement usually realize. Dr. Temple continued by saying that “if you treat as competition for profit what is really cooperation for public service, something is likely to go wrong; but if we treat it for what it is, a great system of cooperation for the general benefit, it will generate good will. But if we are self-centred—which is the source of sin—and attend chiefly to our share or interest in it, it is bound to go wrong in its working and to promote rivalries and enmities.”

This reasoning, together with all similar arguments which are so often brought forward, overlooks a most obvious difficulty. Unfortunately our present economic system is so organized—and this is no dark secret, but is instead openly boasted as one of its chief advantages by orthodox Capitalist economists—that unless it is “conducted for private profit,” it is precisely then, and not otherwise, that something is not only “likely,”

⁵ Reported in *The Living Church*, December 14th, 1935.

but certainly *bound* to "go wrong." The system is organized from its foundation up in a way such that if individuals or groups within it were suddenly to turn "good," in the sense of consistently conducting their businesses on the principle of "co-operation," if they were consistently to behave as if their sole intention, rather than primarily to make a profit for themselves, were to give themselves and their action to society in every possible respect; immediately their own businesses, and finally, if there were enough people so minded, the entire system, would collapse. Economic chaos would ensue. Thus, in an un-Christian economy, Christians are compelled to behave in everyday practice in un-Christian ways; or else they are compelled to become revolutionary menaces to that same evil economy.

Christians need not be forever forced into this dilemma. It is quite possible to devise a cooperative system of economy which will function smoothly when men and women are motivated within it with an immediately cooperative intention. That is to say, it is quite possible in this day and age, whatever may be argued concerning such possibilities in past ages of human history. It is possible and practicable for us now, because of the immense development of modern techniques of material production, and this, as has already been pointed out, is one of the primary reasons why we should now, as never before, attempt the setting up of a consistently Catholic economy.

It is not possible to see how a Catholic economy can ever be one which functions, as does our present one, upon individual profit-making as a fundamental motive. A true Catholicism demands that the primary motive of human economic action shall be that of profit for human society as a whole. Individual profits in their hierarchical order of emphasis will then be not primary aims, but rather secondary, and very likely, for Christians,⁶ quite incidental and even unexpected. For, from

⁶ An economic system based upon Catholic principles of conduct and motivation could, it seems certain, function smoothly even if a large number of people in it were not yet believing Christians. The spirit of self-giving to corporate action is a natural motive and therefore a natural virtue. It is therefore proper to all men and women, Christian or otherwise. It is, however, only Christians who can purify and perfect this motive, since it is only Christians who love God

the Christian point of view, individual profits are never really an aim at all. They should always emerge as a kind of delightful surprise. This does not make material good things and other earthly advantages any the less real or any the less inevitable in a Christian society. On the contrary, they are quite certain to accrue. If, as individuals, we seek first the justice of the Kingdom of God, we shall always receive an individual just share of its goods and advantages as these become available. "All these things shall be added unto us."⁷ But it is important to bear in mind the Christian relative emphasis of intentions and motives. In a society which reflects the order of the Kingdom of God, man's chief material or worldly satisfaction will be attained in the seeking and the maintenance of justice. Private or personal profit can never be sought for itself alone, nor can it be a fundamental motivation. In the Christian view, men do not "lose their lives"—in corporate social action—primarily *in order to* "find them." We are not told "he that loseth his life shall find it" in order that we may elevate the finding of life into a primary motive for losing it. This would be merely a kind of perverse and upsidedown egotism. The primary Christian emphasis must be continually on giving, on sacrifice, on self-spending. The individual return which comes from this—and there is bound to be a great return, according to Our Lord's promise—must always be received with a kind of astonished thankfulness, because this has never in any case been the initial aim. Furthermore, material rewards or advantages are in the end neither parts of man's individual deserving, nor in any sense required elements of God's justice. Man's individual welfare, his happiness, his wealth, his health, in this world as in the next, are always God's free, unmerited and altogether marvellous gifts.

At present there is only one economic system suggested which bids fair to be practicable, which is applicable to our present

alone as their final end, and who have found, in addition, the Way for travelling toward that end. Nevertheless, non-Christians, humanists or others, who believe only that the final end of man is Man and his material welfare, would find themselves, along with Christians, much more at home in a Catholic economy than they do in our present one.

⁷ Matt. 6:33.

stage of material development, and which, at the same time, can legitimately claim to dispense with the profit motive as an incentive to economic production. This is that system of production which is known as a Socialist or, in its finally developed stages, a Communist economy. A thoroughgoing Socialist system would be motivated, as far as individuals are concerned, by the desire to produce those good and useful things which man's intelligence can now draw forth and form from the material resources of God's creation, not for individual profit, but for the use of the entire human community. The motivation of such an economy is one of self-giving and therefore corresponds to a Christian spring of action.

Neither Socialism nor Communism, of course, would do away with what is called the private ownership of property. The private ownership of useful property, of material possessions, useful in the sense of being practically necessary to a secure and peaceful life, as well as in the sense of providing direct enrichment of the spiritual life, is in some sense a human right.⁸ As a matter of fact, one of the chief quarrels our modern Communists have with the present Capitalist economy is that not enough useful and beautiful private property is provided and put into the hands of the average man and woman of our contemporary world. Ordinary people, on the average, do not acquire or possess anything like their just and adequate shares of good food, of houses and lands, of well-made clothing or of books. Neither do they share in those subtler possessions, the aesthetically beautiful objects which ought to be available to them. Furthermore, their access to the advantages of widely extended education and to the enjoyment of the best music and stage productions is either seriously curtailed or absent altogether. A Communist system would aim at spreading abroad this kind of property to as many people as possible, and to any unbiased judgment would seem to be more heartily in favor of

⁸ Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II^a II^{ae}, Quaest. 66, Art. II. "It is lawful for a man to hold private property; and it is also necessary for the carrying on of human life." But see also: II^a II^{ae}, Quaest. 66, Art. VIII where it is stated that in case of "extreme necessity," private property may be taken "either openly or secretly," to supply urgent human needs, without incurring the reproach of theft. Given a social application, this dictum clearly carries a radical threat to our present economic system.

the real institution of private property even than the proponents of our present Capitalist system, since the latter is so obviously failing in reaching the objectives which it claims to advocate.⁹

Two definite characteristics of the economic system of a redeemed world order will be, then, first, that there shall be an exploitation of our natural resources with full use of all modern techniques, and there will be a distribution of the abundance of the goods thus produced, equitably and in such wise that every man, woman and child on earth shall participate fully in that abundance. Second, this system will be so constituted and contrived that it will best operate for the good of each individual when he does actually seek to lose himself in the avenues of corporate self-giving which it will open to everyone. It shall be an economy within which individuals actually stand to receive *most* when they behave *least* as personally acquisitive beings. In fact, such an economy will be in danger of collapse if men and women do behave as primarily acquisitive beings, just as our present one would be in a similar danger if they did not so behave.

⁹For the purposes of Capitalist propaganda it is often said (one cannot but believe at times with a deliberate intention to deceive) that "Communists and Socialists would abolish private property." No responsible Communist theorist supports this contention. Communist economists would restore the ownership of certain kinds of property to the community as a whole. This property includes what are called the "means of production" such as factories, together with the natural resources of the world, such as mines and oil fields, waterways, forests and the great majority of the land. This is the very opposite of abolishing private ownership altogether, since the aim in view is to get more of the things produced from these resources and by these means of production into private hands and upon as broad a base of distribution as possible. Socialists and Communists alike are the great upholders of the doctrine that there must be as much private property for individual use as it is possible for us to produce. What Communists would do, therefore, is to regulate the scope of private ownership, not abolish it. Such a procedure seems in perfect accord with Catholic doctrine. Pope Leo XIII wrote that "the limits of private possession have been left to be fixed by man's own industry and the laws of individual peoples." (Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, on the Condition of Labor, 1891. English Translation in *Four Great Encyclicals*, The Paulist Press, New York, p. 5.) It is calamitous that a later Encyclical of Pope Pius XI seems to go out of its way to repeat the vulgar error that "Communism teaches . . . the complete abolition of private ownership." (Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, 1931. The same translation, p. 152.) This latter statement is so inexact that it is calculated to do a very real damage to the cause of truth. It is to be hoped that this may be remedied by some future authoritative pronouncement.

Under present conditions of technical development, in the midst of a situation which calls for an "economy of abundance" rather than an economy suited to that unavoidable scarcity which has characterized earlier historical ages, Socialism does appear, in theory at least, to offer a rational solution to our problem. The great modern experimental laboratory for Socialism is, of course, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Things are certainly far from perfect there. Communist Socialism is still not an accomplished fact. However, sincere Christians should watch the material and cultural progress being made there with sympathetic and hopeful eyes. Marxian Russia avows its non-Christian theoretical basis. In the judgment of history, this may turn out to be a relatively superficial fact. On the other hand, these same non-Christians, to the shame of supposed Christians, may be working out in the midst of terrible hardships and sacrifices already willingly undergone, a new economic system which will one day serve as the most fitting material productive environment for the growth of the Kingdom of God. It is to be hoped that there will arise Christian Wise Men of today who, with a sensitive and intelligent insight like that possessed by the Magi of old, may pierce the dark mists of our own dissolving Capitalism to see a new Star in the East.¹⁰

Another earmark of a redeemed society will be that men and women within it shall perceive, to an extent limited only by individual natural capacities, the functional relationships of single lives to the order of society as a whole. The fact that individuals have, in general, so little insight into the processes whereby they are knit together into a larger social whole, is one of the greatest faults of our present disorders. It is true that man's social relationships are marred by the fact that, as we have remarked, society itself is not ordered into a single complete whole at all. Our society at best achieves a kind of juxtaposition of discrete and antagonistic areas of order. We can discern, for example, a particular economic class of people which may possess an ordered pattern of life and interests, only

¹⁰ Read in this connection *The Socialist Sixth of the World* by Hewlett Johnson, Dean of Canterbury. London, Gollancz, 1939.

to find that this pattern contains elements of order proper to itself which conflict with other elements of order proper to another class pattern. High wages, for instance, proper to the social order of a wage-earning class, conflict with high profits, which are proper to the social order of a factory-owning or Capitalist class. And in this way, as we have also remarked, class is arrayed against class, one industrial producing unit against another, and finally, "ordered" nations are arrayed against "ordered" nations.

Furthermore, even within limited ordered groups or classes, it is only in highly specialized cases that men and women normally have a satisfactory insight into their functional relationships to some social whole. Members of a fire department, of a police force, or of an army, may very likely experience their lives as more or less rational elements in an integrated social body, whose purposes and actions they understand; and they can thus understand some of the fuller implications of their own individual actions and purposes within those of the whole. Nevertheless, for average people working in the industries of the world, the possibility of this kind of insight is the exception rather than the rule.¹¹ But a redeemed society will be so ordered that all men and women may have a vision of the full social implications of those activities in which they, as individuals, are daily employed. They will be able not only to understand but, to a sufficient and adequate extent, to have practical experience of the beginnings and ends as well as of the whole spread of the social processes in which they have particular parts.

An example taken from the simpler conditions of another age can serve to illuminate this kind of wide social participation

¹¹ We are speaking here of *rational* corporate insight, which is the only kind with which we are concerned at this point. Great industrial and financial corporations, even whole national units, realizing that men need some sense of corporateness if they are to be saved from futility and inaction, attempt to induce an emotional substitute for the true and rational article in situations in which rational understanding would be followed by rebellion rather than by closer allegiance. Irrational corporate solidarity is induced by methods of high pressure propaganda, based upon rationally absurd and mystical ideologies. The fact that these irrational "build-ups" of a false *esprit de corps* seem for a time to succeed in filling the void caused by the absence of any true rational corporate sense, does not, of course, make them desirable. On the contrary, they are a deadly menace to all rational Christian corporate living.

which must be made a thoroughgoing characteristic of any Catholic society. In the medieval period, a Master Shoemaker of some walled town himself labored with his hands in the production of shoes. At the same time, he might quite probably have known personally the farmer who raised the goats whose skins provided his best leathers. He might even at times discuss with this friend the selection of some particular animal for its special hide. He also might have known as a friend the purchaser of a pair of shoes to be worn at a ball in honor of the approaching wedding of his daughter. And in addition, the shoemaker would probably have been an invited guest at that same wedding ball; he might have watched the products of his own hands moving in graceful patterns on the floor of the dance.

This kind of clearly perceived, because actually experienced, personal, functional relationship to society as a whole must be present in every good life. Ultimately, it is true that man's final end and his highest good are only found in God Himself. But in an ordered creation, man must be able to perceive his final end as a logical *terminus ad quem* of an ordered process of history within which he has a rational understanding of his own integrated role. And he must perceive his highest good in the present as the logical crown of an ascending order informing all human experience and within which he understands the relationships of his own appointed place. When men can no longer see their individual relationships to an ordered succession of events in their contemporary history, they are in danger of losing sight of God, who is the end of all history. And when they can no longer see how they take their ordered places in the material and social hierarchy of our natural creation, they are in danger of losing sight of God who is both the foundation and the crown of that creation. If men, bewildered by social disintegration, are unable to love their fellow men through the relationships of an ordered social life, they will be in danger of losing their love of God.

It is argued in certain quarters that absence of individual experience and understanding of the wholeness of our social processes, is a fault not inherent in our Capitalist profit economy,

but rather, is to be attributed exclusively to the conditions of work in our mass production industries. It is argued that while the medieval shoemaker of our own example could achieve an extended social experience within his calling, which gave dignity and meaning to his life, it is far otherwise with a worker in a modern shoe factory. A man who, hour after hour and day after day performs only one monotonous operation, such as, for example, sewing a particular piece of leather or putting buttons on shoes which, by the thousand, come to and go from him on a conveyor belt, such a man experiences neither the beginnings nor the ends of any of those production processes of which his work forms a very specialized link. Such working people seem to be useful only as parts of a larger machine. The less they think, the less they reason, the less they try to follow through the implications of what they do, in other words, the less truly human they are, the more useful they often become in their specialized operations. So mechanical indeed is their work, that they will be continued in employment only so long as it proves impossible to invent another ingenious machine to replace them.

However, it must not be thought that it is either possible or desirable to go backward in history, to resimplify human life, to abolish modern techniques and to return to a medieval economy. The solution of our problem will not be found, as some appear to imagine, in giving up our mass production methods, in dispersing all men into rural communities, and in reverting to such apparatus as handlooms and windmills for the production of material necessities. The solution will be found along the lines of returning both the ownership of industries and the control of their plans and policies to the groups of people who labor within them. The chief incentive for production on the part of the working people will then become that of making things for communal use. With the profit system abolished and an abundance of material goods made available by the fuller, rather than by the more restricted, use of our mass production methods, individuals may be kept at unvarying jobs for relatively short hours. At the same time, the workers will enter democratically, through their elected representatives, into the

management of such affairs as the purchase of raw materials and the dispositions of the products of their own socially controlled producing units. They will begin again, as individuals now within free autonomous owning and producing groups, to experience the social beginnings and ends of their production processes.

In this way it is not at all impossible that a consciousness of social interdependence, based on essential economic production relationships, should arise between large groups of people, between neighboring districts, or even between whole national units. And we may base our predictions of this upon the fact that this kind of vital inter-relationship of one large group of people with another large group is not entirely unknown in our present world. Unfortunately, the experience usually comes to us only under the stress of calamity or crisis. Not long ago, for example, when many thousands of people were rendered homeless and miserable by floods in the Ohio River valley, the people of New England—to name but one group—rose to the occasion with a deep sense of corporate action, sending money, food and clothing to their stricken neighbors of the midwest. In this action, for the time being, the people of New England felt an immediate social relationship with the people of Ohio, and this relationship was cemented and made real by the trans-shipment of needed material goods. This is something which does not happen in the normal commerce of our economy. The people of Lynn and Lawrence, Massachusetts, for example, do not now feel themselves closely knit to the people of Cincinnati, Ohio, by the fact that many shoes and textiles which the former manufacture, are sold through the channels of profit-making trade to the inhabitants of the latter city.

However, such experiences of group relationships will be the normal experiences of a Catholic economy, and they will develop within the neighborly, democratically managed channels of ordinary exchanges of goods. In this connection a story reported some years ago by an American visitor to Moscow will be of interest. It shows, at least, that there is nothing in the makeup of what is called "human nature" which will prevent us from realizing our goal. The visitor in question noticed that

in Moscow there seemed to be a great lack of decent footwear. The average citizen of that city appeared almost pitifully ill-shod. The American enquired about this dearth of shoes and the reply was edifying. For the first time in history the peasants of the surrounding countryside had begun to have enough money to buy decent shoes for themselves. This situation had created a demand so far in excess of the current possibility of supply that it became obvious that a considerable percentage of the people as a whole would have to wait for their new shoes. The question arose as to who should or could best wait. The matter was not settled impersonally by what we would call the "law of supply and demand," the lack of supply raising prices and the wealthy getting the shoes. On the contrary, the problem was submitted for a decision to the city dwellers and it was determined by democratic vote that the peasants, who were in great need of foot-gear for their work in the fields, should take precedence in the available supplies. In the meantime the people of Moscow, by deliberate choice, continued to use their badly worn shoes.

In this incident we have an example of a democratically managed distribution of a manufactured product. The economic control, which in this case involved considerable self-denial on the part of some people, was exercised by one group for the benefit of another. The citizens of Moscow thus came into a relationship with the peasants of their surrounding countryside in a way which should be the normal, everyday kind of thing in any economy which will merit the name of Catholic. And so, by way of further example, in a Christian Commonwealth, the workers in our great steel rolling-mills will not be personally ignorant of travel on those luxury liners constructed of the very steel plates upon which, as mill workers, they themselves have previously labored. Or again, women who tend silk looms or work as seamstresses in dressmaking establishments will themselves, together with their friends, have opportunity of wearing and of seeing worn on festival occasions, the lovely fabrics which their own hands have fashioned. Or, still again, the construction workers on fine and beautiful houses will know what it is like to live and be at home in them. Thus, in the material

processes of a redeemed economy, free men and women will be able, not alone in imagination,¹² but also in first-hand experience, to trace their own social relationships to their fellow men, both as individuals and as members of larger groups. They will be enabled adequately to experience the beginnings and the ends of those social processes of which their own specialized activities form the now rationally understood parts.

The highest natural function of man resides in the exercise of his free rational intelligence. It follows that a redeemed social order will offer to all individuals a maximum of opportunities to exercise freedom of choice, both among various possible occupations and in the selection of interests for individual pursuit. Such freedom on the part of individuals will not be limited by any arbitrary pressure, economic or other, exerted upon their fellow men by other specially privileged individuals or groups for the purposes of their own exclusive interests.

In our Capitalist system as it operates today, the working people have only a highly theoretical—which is in practice to say imaginary—freedom to change their jobs or to develop special gifts and talents, when they are found to possess them. A married man with a family of children, working for wages and, often, for what is even called a salary, can usually be described as having given what are termed “hostages to fortune.” This is an appropriate phrase; for it means that he is as much caught in an unchangeable position in the economic system as was any slave of the Roman Empire. If he makes bold to try to extricate himself, his hostages, that is, his family, will not, of course, be murdered. They will merely be allowed to suffer from exposure, undernourishment and the utter lack of every amenity of life.

A characteristic of a Catholic social order, on the other hand, will be the presence of the kind of genuine freedom which most people now lack. People who work, which will include all the able-bodied and able-minded among the population in a Christian order, will be free to change their jobs and to experiment

¹² Wistful and frustrated imaginings, empty day-dreaming, are the only substitutes for this kind of experience open to working people today. This is what makes the society columns of our newspapers and their picture supplements popular with people who are forever barred from the actual experiences there portrayed.

with various kinds of work, provided they find one line of work distasteful and ill-adapted to them, and they believe that they can do better in some other line.¹³ Furthermore, if they can give evidence of possessing promising intellectual or aesthetic gifts, they will be enabled to find and to accept opportunities for their development. Upon this kind of freedom there will be placed no arbitrary limits, above all no limits such as those which arise from the kind of social and economic lacks and insecurities which inhere in our present system. Individual freedom of social choices and actions must be conditioned only by considerations of the welfare of individuals against the background of the welfare of the whole social order and the common good, not by considerations of the special welfare of a certain few who are privileged through the exclusive ownership of capital wealth.

In connection with the foregoing reflections it should be noted that one of the principal limitations placed upon the freedom of working men at the present time is found in the customarily precarious economic dependence of their families upon them. Many a labor struggle in the interest of an increased freedom has failed because of the material want and suffering entailed among the workers' womenfolk and children. In a Catholic economy, this kind of purely economic dependence on the part of workers' wives and children will also be totally absent. All members of a Catholic order will be assured of a just share in the material wealth which society produces. This means that married women and children will receive their own shares of these things; and they will receive them as persons and in their own right. They will not be forced to receive their material necessities through the mediation of the men of their households, but they will have their own economic independence directly from that society in which they will be considered in the light of producers, or potential producers, as much as anyone else.

Incidentally, a welcome fruit of this kind of economic independence of wives and children will be the fact that family life

¹³ Work, of course, includes all constructive productive effort, manual, intellectual or other.

itself will be put upon a much more Christian basis than it often is at present. The principal bond of family life can no longer be that of an economic dependence, a thing all too common in our modern world. This will mean that the truly Christian cement of family solidarity, love and devotion of husband and wife, the love and hope which center in the children of a household, in other words, those deep wellsprings of family unity upon which a properly Sacramental marriage must alone rest, will once more come fully into their own. In our present society they are too often obscured, and even destroyed completely, by the evil emotional strains, the worries and the resentments which unwelcome but totally unbreakable economic bonds can engender. If a Christian Socialist or Communist economy can abolish the economic chains in family life, and replace them with freely assumed and voluntarily maintained bonds of love and affection, it will do much to justify itself not only as the upholder of the right of personal private property, but of genuine Christian family life as well.

With hours of labor at monotonous jobs vastly shortened by intelligent and untrammelled use of mass production techniques; with laboring men and women participating fully in a communally owned and democratically controlled economy; with the workers of the world producing both their material necessities and their luxuries for a mutual and common good, in such wise that commerce does in fact at last become a system of group relationships which binds men together in a rationally understood solidarity upon a broad basis of substantial material welfare; with men and women working at tasks which are carefully distributed according to considerations of individual temperaments and skills; under such conditions, which are by no means impossible of achievement, we may expect to see an entirely new attitude toward the world's work developing among all men.

Wage workers of today, whose loyalty and allegiance to our social order can, in the nature of things, be based neither on an adequate understanding of its processes nor upon an ownership of its producing resources, find their lives divided into two spheres of attention. On the one hand, work, which has to be done under penalty of starvation, tends to be regarded as a little

understood but necessary evil. Hence the chief intentions with regard to it are to shorten it as much as possible and, at the same time, to get as much money from it in the form of wages as can be exacted from the employing class. On the other hand, high wages and shorter hours are desired not because they are seen to be either good or bad for our social economy as a whole, but because the workers want as much money and time as possible to devote to the other sphere of their lives. This is the sphere of their "real lives," the sphere of home and family, of rest and recreation, of "good times" and of occasional holidays. It is also the sphere of whatever intellectual and spiritual interests may be theirs. But work, instead of being seen as the primary foundation of a single complete and good life informed in its own right with a sense of creative joy, is looked upon as an evil from which men must escape as often and for as long a time as possible. And leisure, which is often mere exhausted idleness, holidays and vacations, diversions which seek to blot out the memory of working days, tend to become a major objective.¹⁴ Thus the good and happy things of life tend to be completely separated in thought from men's working hours, and human experience is cut into two parts. The warp of life's web is separated from its woof and what should be true *re-creation* outside of working hours, in preparation for a happy return to work, becomes instead a way of escape and a forgetting of work which,

¹⁴ Popular means of diversion, the movies, the radio, the motor car, current light literature, the dance with its vulgar music, even our commercialized and almost wholly vicarious sports, are given over in large measure to escapist pastimes which seem deliberately and romantically unrelated to the drab rest of existence. Since these means of amusement for the masses are largely purveyed by great profit-making financial interests, their escapist content has a twofold foundation. First, under present conditions, escape of some sort is a psychological necessity for the majority of people. Therefore to provide the means of escape becomes a most lucrative form of business. Second, it would be dangerous to lead the masses into too much realistic thought about the present conditions of their lives. To avoid this, Finance-Capitalism, with its unflinching instinct for self-preservation, tries to crowd out rational thought from even the leisure hours of the masses. It is encouraging that the people are beginning to demand and to obtain a certain number of good movies, broadcast plays and radio discussions, which do both divert and edify, and which are definitely related to the deeper problems of the day. And it is also interesting to note that these really significant forms of amusement tend to be viewed with suspicion by the more substantial members of the community, while so-called "controversial" material sometimes achieves the censor's ban.

for its part, is looked upon not as another major good, but as something tiresome and unpleasant.

Therefore, another characteristic of a redeemed social order, a fruit of the restoration of the sense of wholeness to life, will be the fact that our recreations, our absences from work and our holiday periods will be felt as continuous parts of a single life, standing in a definite organic relationship to our working periods. Recreations will be seen as periods of true re-creation in preparation for more work. And, since work will become absorbingly interesting because it has been made socially corporate and its economic relationships are clearly understood, approaching holidays will be pleasantly anticipated during working periods, but not impatiently longed for as a means of escape. And holidays will themselves be enriched by a conscious understanding of those well-earned fruits of social labor with which they will be filled. They will be seen as opportunities of individual growth and of broadening intellectual insight into each person's place within the wide social organism of the world. Finally, as holidays draw to their close, the individual attitude will not be one of increasing distress because of an imminent return to the prison-house of work, but rather one of happy anticipation, after recreation, of returning to the busy, producing part of life with enthusiasm rekindled and with strength reborn.

All of these characteristics of a Catholic social order may be summed up by saying that in a redeemed world there will be *a maximum of free rational participation on the part of all individuals in the varied processes of corporate human living*. Management of governmental, as well as of economic affairs,¹⁵ will doubtless be largely carried on through expert administrators. However, these administrators will always be elected or appointed as representatives of the people themselves who, although they may delegate a technical control, will continue to be both the owners of all economic producing agencies and the seat of ultimate authority. Furthermore, all appointed admin-

¹⁵ In the re-created functional wholeness of a redeemed order, government and industry, of which at best we are accustomed to think as completely distinct and, at worst, as inimical to each other, will coalesce, becoming inseparable and even indistinguishable.

istrators, together with the processes they manage, will always remain freely accessible to the people as a whole both in respect to general direction of policies and, in the case of individual appointees, in respect to the possibility of replacement. The people's free authority will require that no delegated control shall ever be irrevocably put in individual hands, and that no representative persons shall ever be installed in such wise that they become permanently beyond recall and, as it were, established above the people's reach. It is only when these avenues of rational individual participation in corporate life are opened to all, and when, in addition, men and women begin to avail themselves of these privileges, that human beings will be enabled to make actual within our creation those rational potentialities with which, from the beginning, their nature has been endowed. In other words, it is only then that they will develop the full stature of created beings who will be worthy of the high name of a true humanity.

The fundamental principles of the social order required in a redeemed world are those of one which is usually described as a representative democracy.¹⁶ This is the only form of social organization which seems to offer the required opportunities for men's complete and free participation in their own affairs and, at the same time, which contains the possibility of smooth and efficient functioning. However, this system of social order must obviously be not only further perfected, but extended far beyond mere political government, the only area of life in which we have until now seen it even partially applied. It must be extended to industry and commerce, to education, to research and to the arts as well. In short, it must be extended to every field of human endeavor.

Here again, it is hard to see how any plan of social order other than that which can be worked out under some form of economic Communism, can accomplish this required extension of rational democracy. It may be objected that the Soviet Union, the one place in the world where we may observe the transition from Capitalism to Communism actually going on,

¹⁶ Applied to the political organization of society only, this is called a Republic.

has offered a picture not only marred by violence, but has exhibited features of autocratic, repressive rule over certain sections of the population, which seem to us incongruous even with a rudimentary political democracy. However, these facts must not mislead us into thinking that violence and dictatorship are necessarily inherent in a broadened democracy itself, and they must not discourage us from believing that some sort of Communist economy will be available to the purposes of a Catholic order. For we have to remember that every revolutionary period, to which our American "Revolution" was no exception, is bound to be unsettled. The principles which are the objectives of revolutionary change have never yet been successfully applied in their purity during the time that the intensive revolutionary process was actually going on. We may entertain a good hope that undemocratic faults, if they exist in Russia, are there as accidents, rather than as properties of Communism. There is nothing in the nature of a Communist economy itself which necessarily makes for either violence or dictatorship. On the contrary, peace and the widest possible democracy are not only its avowed purposes, but, in the hands of people of goodwill, its very real possibilities. Therefore, if some so-called "Communism" is seen to be repressive and undemocratic, it means either that this particular experiment has failed, or that it has not yet reached its complete goal.

The much more fundamental reason why, on the other hand, the potentialities of a Communist order seem attractive from a Catholic point of view, is that such an order would abolish the private ownership of our means of production; and it is this kind of ownership which appears clearly as the chief obstacle in the peoples' path for the achieving of a wider democratic control over their corporate lives. The extension of our own representative political democracy into economic life will require the overthrow of the industrial empires of today, just as its achievement, at its own beginning, required the overthrow of the feudal empires long ago. Therefore, it seems likely to the point of certainty that a redeemed Christian democracy will select a Communist economy as that which, under present conditions, is the one most suited to its own further use.

In opposition to this insistence that a redeemed social order must be characterized by the most thoroughgoing democracy obtainable, and by the most extensive rational participation possible on the part of all its members in the processes of that democracy, it may be urged that Our Lord Himself, together with the Church which follows Him, speaks always of the Reign of God. Our Lord's own description of humanity redeemed within His Incarnation is not that of a democracy, but of a Kingdom, and within this He reigns supreme.

As a matter of ultimate fact it is of course true that, in the Christian view, God alone reigns supreme in His universe. All physical and animal creation must conform to His will and to that alone. What we call the laws of nature, together with moral laws, are particular formulations of God's will, as this is understood either from observations of nature, of man or, in the case of moral law, as it is additionally known from God's own Self-revelation. These laws are discovered by man to be embedded in the very nature of things, as well as in his own human nature. They are neither decided upon, nor are they set up through his initiative. Man simply finds himself in the presence of certain realities. He may do no more than discover these and govern himself accordingly.

Neither can these laws, which flow from the Being of God and which are manifest in His creation, be broken by man. They may be transgressed; but that is another matter. For example, to jump from a high building is not to break the so-called law of gravitation. It is simply to transgress it. In fact, far from breaking the law, such an act is rather to invite its immediate operation with equally immediate and disastrous results. Like considerations hold true of the moral law. Man may, if he so chooses, refuse his allegiance to God's will. He cannot, however, set that will permanently aside. The results of every attempt to do this may not be so immediately evident as are those of a refusal to regard the fact of gravitation, but they are bound in the end to be none the less sure.

And so, in the Kingdom of God, it is true that Our Lord alone reigns. The re-creation of the world in His Incarnation is through His initiative and, ultimately, is His work alone. In

this sense, the Reign of God requires, as we have already said, a totalitarian allegiance to Him on the part of man. Within His Kingdom, Christ's rule is absolute and supreme. "The Lord reigneth; He is apparelled with majesty. He hath girded Himself with strength. His throne is established from old."¹⁷

But this seeming contradiction, between the requirement of a perfected democracy in a redeemed human society on earth and the ultimate fact of God's absolute supremacy within His Kingdom, is apparent rather than real. The answer to the problem is found in an understanding of God's chosen method for the redemption of the world in His Incarnation. A re-created, a re-ordered society in this world is, as we have seen, not the whole Kingdom of God, but only the natural substance of that Kingdom-in-the-making. It is Our Lord's extending humanity, not His Risen Life; it is the bread and wine of the people's offering, not Our Lord's Body and Blood. And within the process of man's corporate redemption while this remains upon the level of the natural world, man's rational freedom is never overruled. Man is invited to come into the Order of the Incarnation, but never compelled to do so. *Man is never to be saved in spite of himself.* Within Our Lord's humanity, the cooperation of free human intelligence is to be utilized to the utmost. And this is the difference, as we have already remarked, between the Reign of God and the rule of man. God is King, but He wills to reentrust Himself to man. This is the principle of Bethlehem. This is the principle of His gift of the Holy Communion after Mass. God wills to trust His own omnipotence into the hands of men, in order to redeem them to Himself as beings both rational and free. And if He refuses to overrule the dignity of creative human freedom, much less may man overrule his fellow man. Hence the necessity of a perfected democracy within any society which, in its human aspects, reflects the Order of God's Kingdom, and which prepares the foundation of that Kingdom upon the natural level of this world.

This principle is illustrated by the primitive usage of the Church in the selection of her ruling Bishops. These Bishops

¹⁷ Psalm 93.

were, for many centuries, always elected for their future posts by a popular vote within the local Church communities in which they were to serve. Fortunately this usage still prevails in many parts of the Church today.¹⁸ Thus, in the making of their Bishops, the people of the Kingdom here on earth do their necessary part. They put forward their democratically chosen representatives. Once this is done, God, who reigns within that Kingdom, responds to the people's offering of any particular representative man in such wise that an Order¹⁹ and a grace are bestowed which far transcend the power of unaided humanity, and which certainly do not have their source in the majority votes of the future Bishop's community. But even in the act of bestowing this additional Sacramental power upon His people's chosen representative, God returns Himself into the keeping of the free society of His Church, as the Bishop comes forth from his Consecration. He comes forth with a Divine grace, to be sure, but a grace given into free human hands as he continues to minister to those same men and women who first put him forward to receive a Sacramental Consecration on their behalf. Thus, in fundamental principle, the human social expression of God's Kingdom is utterly democratic. The sad abuse of this principle which has characterized the visible Church in various ages and places, may obscure, but not eliminate this fundamental fact. It is to this rational democracy of the human foundation of the Kingdom of God, that a redeemed society will return.²⁰

¹⁸ *E.g.*, in the Episcopal Church in the United States. The appointment of Bishops, prior to their consecrations, by any non-democratic center of authority, is an obvious and grave abuse within the Catholic Church. It is a weak concession to human fear and distrust of man himself, utterly foreign to the principle of the Incarnation.

¹⁹ This is why the Sacramental Consecration of a Bishop is called the bestowal of Holy Order.

²⁰ In this connection see Fr. Dix's passage: "The Hierarchy in the Church," *The Parish Communion*, edited by Fr. A. G. Hebert, S.P.C.K., London, 1937, pp. 130-131.

XIX

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A REDEEMED SOCIAL ORDER (Continued)

IN THE minds of some people, a democratic order is associated with the notion that all individuals within it must inevitably conform to a monotonous level of intelligence and of general development. It is supposed that if a democratic society is to function successfully, it must be based upon the assumption that all men are created "equal," using that word almost in the sense of "identical." This notion would imply that the more nearly a social order achieves a true democracy, the more nearly alike will its members be, cut, as it were, from a universally uniform pattern. Furthermore, the norm or standard of this pattern to which individuals will be compelled by their democratic environment to conform, will not be that of the highest human types which we now know. Still less is it apt to be of a loftier quality. On the contrary, it is feared that the democratic type must be a sort of mean and average thing, the lowest common denominator of our present materialistic and money-making culture. This will give us a standard type of humanity low enough so that those now beneath it may be raised to its level, but to which also those who tend to be above it, even though they be of very superior qualities and gifts, must, for the sake of "democracy," inevitably be reduced. People who think thus suppose that at present our own best cultural values are precariously preserved for us only by those who succeed in evading or thwarting these "laws" of democracy and who form a kind of precious and alien intellectual and aesthetic aristocracy in our midst.¹

If there is truth in this gloomy prediction that a thoroughly

¹ For extended developments of these depressing ideas, see *The Degradation of the Democratic Dogma*, Henry Adams, New York, 1920; and *The Nemesis of Mediocrity*, Ralph Adams Cram, Boston, 1919.

democratic society must, in the nature of things, tend to flatten out all human culture at a relatively low level, that it will be intolerant of personal individuality and envious of outstanding distinctions and gifts, then for this reason alone democratic institutions are but ill-adapted to a Catholic order. For no Catholic order, reflecting as it must the Catholic doctrine of the nature of man, can be based upon the inadmissible assumption that all men are, or, for the sake of democratic convenience, must be made, alike. On the contrary, men and women are created with widely varying gifts and capacities, widely varying aptitudes and potentialities for development, widely different talents.² This undoubted fact must certainly be taken account of in a redeemed order. In fact, one of the most obvious characteristics of a redeemed society will be that men and women will be encouraged to the utmost to develop whatever special capacities they may be found to possess. And not only this; for if individuals are found endowed with gifts of any sort which may fit them for responsibilities and activities far above the capacities possessed by their more average fellow men, functional positions will be found for them within the social order where they may not only use, but also cultivate, these exceptional gifts, both for their own and for the common good.

In other words, a Catholic social order is bound to present a richly varied hierarchical structure, with all its members performing different functions, some of which will be high and some lowly; some abstract and intellectual, some concrete and physical; some concerned with the beautiful and aesthetic, some with the starkly plain and practical. This much has been clear to Christians from the beginning, since it was the Apostle Paul who first likened the Christian order to the hierarchy of members in a living human body, with its many organs of different office, of different honor and of different comeliness, but all

² The very word "talent" itself, which in Greek denotes a weight or sum of money, has derived its peculiar English meaning of special capacity or gift from one of Our Lord's own parables which concerns the Order of the Kingdom of Heaven. A certain man, about to go on a journey, entrusted five, and two talents, and one talent of money, respectively into the hands of three different servants, "to every man according to his ability." This parable holds a clear denial of the false equalitarian notion that within a redeemed order all men are to be treated as if they had identical abilities. Matt. 25:14-30.

working together in necessary harmony to compose a single whole.³

Fortunately, it can be shown that there is no principle inherent in a representative democracy as such, which must necessarily conflict with this other Catholic insistence upon a hierarchical social structure. A true and universal democracy will not impede a genuine and wide diversification of individual qualities and functions. Opinions contrary to this are based upon interpretations of certain disturbing trends and tendencies toward a cultural levelling process which are discoverable within our own present political democracies. However, these trends are the result of causes quite other than democracy, and there is good reason to believe that these faults will not be increased, but, on the contrary, that it may be possible completely to eliminate them when we achieve a Catholic democracy going beyond political organization and thoroughly invading the fields of our economic life.

As a matter of fact, to attribute to all people who are bred in what is called a democratic tradition, an inevitable distrust and fear of assigning any special positions of hierarchical distinction, honor, or even power, to some of their fellow men, is to fall into an error which is denied by the actual circumstances of life around us. Our present politically democratic structure has not prevented the development of a social hierarchy which is a very real fact in our modern world, and which is widely accepted without adverse criticism. We have, at this very moment, a social hierarchy of ascending privileges and powers which is based upon the private control of economic wealth. The fact that this is a thoroughly bad basis upon which to build the pyramidal structure of our corporate life, does not make the latter any the less hierarchical. In America, for example, there are a relatively small number of people who, through ownership, either personally achieved or acquired by what amounts to dynastic inheritance, possess the chief control over our sources of raw materials together with our industrial means of production. They have also come to control the vast laboratory equipments required for the development of new techniques of production,

³ Romans 12:3-8; I Cor. 12:12-31.

and of new desirable things to be produced. These few people possess the privileges and powers of what is in fact, if not in theory, a very real social aristocracy. On the other hand, the social pyramid broadens progressively downward and, at its base, is supported by a vastly more numerous class of working people who, so long as our present economic system functions normally and tranquilly, have little or no economic power, little or no say in the way our industries shall be run, and little or no social prestige. They themselves own none of our means of production and, in order to live, can only sell their ability to work in the factories of the owning aristocracy.

Democracy, as we know it, has not yet seriously questioned this system of economic social hierarchy, nor has it found it incompatible with its principles. We have therefore no evidence that the institution of representative democracy, as such, has in principle any prejudice against a social structure which assigns power and privilege, honor or executive responsibility to certain of its members more than to others. Furthermore, with respect to directive power and control over the lives of others, with respect to material amenities and cultural opportunities, with respect to social honor and prestige, which our democracies award willingly to the owners of economic wealth, there is anything but a "levelling off" process proceeding in the world around us. On the contrary, economic class distinctions, based on the ownership and non-ownership of capital wealth and control of finance, tend to become more and more marked; the contrasts between the comforts and securities of the rich and the privations and insecurities of the people who can work only for wages, become more and more acute and clear. Our most privileged class tends to grow ever smaller in numbers; and the pyramid of our social hierarchy, while both broadening and deepening at its base, is becoming increasingly pointed at the top. In other words, the *real* hierarchy which we now have, and which exists alongside of a political democracy, permits the continuance of enormous distinctions in rank. And our *real* hierarchy is not being "levelled off" at all.

The fundamental principle upon which any given social hierarchy is built, that is, the standard upon which individuals' so-

cial values are judged, and in accordance with which they have their relative positions of power and prestige assigned to them in its organized structure, has one very striking characteristic. It is a "jealous" principle or standard. It will not tolerate, if it can help it, any other principle of hierarchy besides itself. And the reason for this is that, if it did acknowledge the equal validity of any other principle, it would be in danger of its own very existence. While any given principle of social distinction or class division holds sway in any group of people, it must make the claim of being unique and final. If other kinds of personal distinctions or differences of individual values appear in such a group, these must be made to seem accidental or of only superficial importance. Otherwise, the hierarchy set up upon the other principle will be threatened with collapse. Therefore, the general tendency in a social hierarchy is not only to minimize all distinctions between people which cannot be related organically to its own special principle of ascending order, but eventually to try actually to eliminate these other distinctions altogether.

Our social hierarchy is, as we have said, based upon the ownership of capital wealth. Our "best people," in the only real and deep sense of that expression which relates it to our economic hierarchy, are those who have succeeded in getting the chief control of this wealth. But in any given hierarchy, the "best people" must be made to seem the best in a complete and absolute sense. They cannot acknowledge without a sense of affront and discomfort any basis of individual worths and values other than the ownership of wealth. They can acknowledge no other basis of values which would entitle their possessors to any equal social position with them, even from the point of view of mere prestige or honor. Above all, the possession of wealth must be kept the sole criterion for the awarding of hierarchical directive power. For example, our hierarchy, if it is compelled thereto, may assign a certain amount of precedence in honor to one of its members who is an outstanding artist or a great musician. However, even the greatest artists and musicians will never be given any genuine social and economic power in that hierarchy, unless they save their money from concert fees and buy a con-

trolling financial interest in some industrial or financial corporation. If they do this, they will have a certain power given to them immediately; but this will not be because they are artists. Our social hierarchy does not advance its members upward within its actual vital structure on the basis of artistic criteria. Our hypothetical artists will be advanced because they have acquired an owning share in our means of economic production, and can thus make claim to eminence on a basis which is in accord with our peculiar hierarchical principle.⁴

It happens that the people who occupy high places in our actual economic hierarchy are, as a matter of experience, forced by brute facts to admit that there are other people in the world who have both worth and importance, of some kind at least, because of personal qualities which are not related to the ownership of wealth. But if such ownership be the only quality necessary to give them their own undoubted present pre-eminence, how can they make the embarrassing admission that unpropertied artists and intellectuals, for example, are in some sense very valuable, and at the same time withhold the rewards and powers which are reserved only for themselves? For, to bestow functional power upon a basis solely of artistic or intellectual merit would be to admit that their own hierarchical pre-eminence is really not absolute and exclusive! The latter dilemma becomes particularly embarrassing when it is recalled that our upper hierarchs themselves, almost without exception, completely lack the subtle qualities and gifts peculiar to our artists, our intellectual leaders, our experts in the spiritual life. It would therefore be fatal to their position, as well as to their *amour propre*, to concede more than a relative and superficial worth to what we call cultural values.

This difficulty can be met in at least two ways. Personal qual-

⁴ At first glance it may seem curious, but even business executive ability, taken by itself, is not acknowledged as giving its possessor a valid claim to secure or permanent hierarchical power. Since it is true that those who own wealth have often first possessed executive ability, it is sometimes imagined that they have their present hierarchical powers because of that ability, rather than because of their wealth. That this is an error is shown by the fact that the highest paid business executive in any corporation, unless he also owns a controlling voting interest in that corporation's stock, can be "fired" over night by those who do have that control.

ities and gifts which are not connected with wealth—which may not, therefore, be permitted, according to the principles of our present order, to have a true hierarchical place—can either be taken under the wing of rich people and thus made to seem dependent upon the latter; or such extra-hierarchical individual worths may be deprecated, and made to seem in all respects unimportant. We can discover both of these tactics in present use. The upper members of our true hierarchy become patrons of artists and they buy their works; they endow universities and give employment to intellectually trained workers. This makes it clear to all right-thinking people that aesthetic and intellectual gifts, although they seem to have a certain worth in their own right, do actually take their hierarchical values, in so far as they have any assigned to them, from those who already occupy the primary hierarchical positions for correct and proper reasons, namely the possession of wealth.

On the other hand, if it suits the purposes of those who are powerful in our hierarchy to withdraw this kind of patronage, intellectual and aesthetic attainments may be deprecated so that they begin to appear not only as valueless, but as dangerous to the social hierarchy. Trained university economists can be classified as impractical theorists⁵ if they advocate displeasing economic plans. The work of artists and skilled craftsmen becomes useless or, at best, an unnecessary luxury, if people with aesthetic gifts have to be paid out of the proceeds of business taxation.⁶ Even the teachers of Christian principles become “idealistic dreamers” as soon as they dare to suggest that there might be some other qualities discoverable in human beings vastly more appropriate as judgment bases for a practical, working social hierarchy than the mere ownership of wealth.

As a matter of fact, in order to “save the faces” of our true hierarchs in all the manifold situations of our social life, there is a subtle and almost universal deprecation of all values other than ownership of capital wealth, certainly of all those which we call cultural, in the narrower use of that word. There is a

⁵ *E.g.*, some of Mr. Roosevelt's New Deal expert advisers.

⁶ We may recall our recent experience with the attitude of the National Congress toward the Arts Project of the W.P.A.

tendency to deprecate all purely intellectual, aesthetic or religious disciplines. It requires unusual or outstanding stamina and determination on the part of young men and women in our present society to devote themselves exclusively to the cultivation of their gifts in those "impractical" fields, to an "unapplied" intellectual, aesthetic or religious life. They are commonly compelled to throw sops to public opinion in the form of protests that, however impractical their interests and enthusiasms may seem at the outset, nevertheless, in the end they may have "valuable," meaning economically profitable, results. And the consequence of this state of affairs is that a great deal of our more modest or average talent in non-money-making fields is completely suppressed before it can bear any fruit whatever.⁷

Perhaps enough has been said to show that if there is a very real tendency in our present social order to "level off" the cultural attainments of our average citizens, and to equalize their intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual cultivation upon a mediocre and commonplace plane, the villain in the piece is not Democracy at all. The real villain is our Capitalist economic system which demands a social hierarchy based upon the ownership of capital wealth, and upon this alone. The democratic principle, which implies no more than the free, intelligent participation of all people in their own social processes, is quite indifferent to the general problem of social hierarchy. Instead, it is that plutocratic hierarchy which we already have that tries its best to suppress all other potentially hierarchical values, precisely in order that its own exclusive claims may never be called in question.

The embarrassment in which our Capitalist hierarchy finds itself is, in one respect, even greater than that caused by the problem of cultural attainments. Its ascending order is, as we have seen, based upon the ownership of capital wealth. In theory, this would seem at least to have the advantage of offering an objective, impersonal standard upon which individuals may

⁷ A good many years ago, the then president of one of our largest steel-producing corporations, in a burst of mid-ocean confidence, told the present author that he was "fond of poetry" himself, but that he would "rather see a son of his dead than trying to be a poet."

have their relative positions in our social structure assigned to them. However, when we probe beneath the surface, even this standard is far from being so impersonal as it superficially appears. It is true that artistic or abstract intellectual talents, for example, have little connection with an ability to acquire private property, considering the manner in which this has to be acquired in our economy. There are, however, other qualities of human character which are definitely related to this ability. And these latter qualities do not turn out to be admirable, even when judged from the ordinary standards of natural decency. They turn out, in fact, to be thoroughly disreputable.

Those who are the most likely to acquire for themselves large shares in our capital wealth within an economy of production primarily for private profit must, in the first place, have a highly developed materially acquisitive enthusiasm. And since profits must be made in a system which functions upon the theoretical assumption of unrestrained competition, a special premium is also put upon such personal qualities as ruthlessness, callousness in the presence of the discomfiture of vanquished opponents and, in general, an ability to disregard the miseries caused by those failures which are invariably complementary to every outstanding business success. Furthermore, those people who succeed in modern business are endowed with the gambling instinct in highly developed form; and they must possess the gambler's craftiness and guile, which can lure business opponents into false decisions while they themselves make profitable ventures. In short, our principle of social hierarchy does, after all, take *certain kinds* of personal characteristics into account and makes them the real, if hidden, basis for its assignments of social rank. And these qualities which it selects for special rewards are found upon examination to be chiefly the amiable virtues of an untamed jungle.⁸

On the one hand, therefore, a purely material basis for our social hierarchy seems irrational, and difficult to make exclusively plausible in the presence of those cultural qualities of real human worth which are found on every hand, of which our

⁸None of these characteristics is considered "dishonest," that is, at variance with actual economic ethics.

hierarchy must consistently refuse to take account. On the other hand, if we examine the spiritual qualities which in practice gain our hierarchy's highest recognition, these turn out to be preposterous and utterly intolerable. Another and also a blanket solution of this double difficulty is to pretend that we actually have no hierarchy at all! Everyone really is exactly alike! Even the possession of wealth is made to seem an irrelevant and minor detail. There are no "real" differences between our greatest business magnates and our lowliest wage workers. Education, luxury, aesthetic gifts, leisure, cultural opportunities, all these things, forsooth, make a mere unimportant veneer. Beneath these irrelevancies the rich and the poor, the privileged and the scandalously underprivileged, are all "just folks" together. The rich are said to lead notoriously simple lives. They eat simple food, they go to bed early, they toil all day at desks, they take off their jackets in hot weather, they hate to "dress up," they dislike formal parties, which they attend only as a kind of duty. In short it is the poor who are to be envied, because, while they are "just as good" as the rich, they are free from the burdens and the boredom which riches always entail!

It is strange that a picture so amazingly untrue to the clear realities of our plutocratic hierarchy ever gains credence with anyone whatever. It does, however, at present gain an almost universal acceptance. And this carefully cherished falsification of the realities of our social structure passes for a description of what is called "Democracy." It is a propaganda which certainly tends to level and to debase our cultural life. But it actually has nothing to do with Democracy. It is simply one of the chief tricks whereby an unjust and irrational principle of social hierarchy seeks to evade notice, and thus to escape a criticism which would lead to its certain overthrow.⁹

⁹ There are wealthy people, highly placed in our social order, whose fortunes have been transmitted to them through several generations. Such people are often very cultured and quite free from the evil characteristics here just associated with their hierarchical positions. This state of affairs is possible because our hierarchy permits—without interference from our Democracy—the foundation of family dynasties of wealth. The later descendants of dynastic Founders can often escape from the qualities in which their ancestors were conditioned. However, if they go far enough back in their family lines, someone can usually be found who was, in all respects, a typical Capitalist hierarch.

Since, therefore, a redeemed society must be both democratic and hierarchical, Catholics have no quarrel with the principles either of Democracy or of Hierarchy, as such; but they must quarrel both with our actual democracy and our present hierarchy, because the former is not sufficiently widespread and is limited to the political order, and because the latter is based on a bad principle, which refuses to find genuine places in its structure for the most important values potential in human nature. In other words, Catholics must criticize our administration of social processes, not because this is democratic, but *because it is not democratic enough*; they must criticize our present social hierarchy not because individual and class distinctions are made among its members, but *because we are prevented from having genuine value-distinctions enough*.

Our immediate social objective, therefore, must be to get rid of that which is both the foundation and the bulwark of our plutocratic hierarchical principle, namely the private ownership of the means of production. Thus we shall be able, as we have remarked, to broaden our popular democratic participation in social processes, and at the same time it will become possible to introduce a new principle of social hierarchy, based upon admirable and socially useful human gifts and talents, rather than upon the despicable and anti-social ones which, we have just seen, inform our present basis of hierarchical judgments. And here, once again, Catholics can agree with Communists, in so far as the latter maintain that socialization of capital wealth is the first great step required for the setting up of our new hierarchical standards.

The hierarchy of a humanity redeemed in the Incarnation will be rooted quite naturally, as is the Incarnation itself, in the structure of our material order. Men and women will take rank and power according to their practical gifts and their intellectual equipments for performing socially useful work. This implies, for example, that trained engineers and technical ex-

It is also possible to discover highly placed wealthy old gentlemen who have made their own money, but who have succeeded in leaving behind the characteristics of their class. In such cases it is necessary to examine those activities and personal qualities which characterized their youthful business careers.

perts, as well as capable organizational administrators, will occupy relatively high, secure and functional places in our hierarchy. For it is these people upon whom will depend both the quality and the abundance of our material necessities, of our comforts and of all those equipments of every variety which stand ready to contribute to the smoothness of the routine of life and to its material amenities and beauties. At present, even such indispensable and obviously profit-providing members of our society as these are excluded from functional positions within our hierarchy and, being but salaried employees, are made to depend upon our actual hierarchs of wealth. But in a social order in which such ownership is socialized and generalized, and can therefore contribute nothing whatever to individual social importance or prestige, it will be possible to develop a *functional* hierarchy distributing a genuine ascending rational precedence among those who are the experts of its technical and administrative requirements.

At the same time, in such a society, the expression "socially useful" will receive a much wider interpretation than is now possible to us. In our hierarchy, "socially useful" means, to put it bluntly, *profitable*, able to make money. It means no more and no less than this, however much we try to veil this horrid truth. But in a redeemed order the socially useful will assuredly include directly and immediately, rather than contingently, all productive work in intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual fields, even the most speculative and abstract. For the fruits of such occupations will not be gauged according to the estimated money profit which some Capitalist owner may eventually draw from them, but, instead, they will be evaluated solely according to the degree in which they enhance the spiritual quality of the life of man. Therefore, here again, within the hierarchy of a redeemed order, functional precedence in varied degree will be assigned to those who divert and amuse their fellow men, to those who instruct and edify, to those who create, interpret, or mediate beauty of all kinds, to those who enrich life by extending the horizons of scientific knowledge or by deepening men's philosophical insights into reality, and to those who inspire men with new enthusiasms and fire their wills to

higher realizations of human potentialities. All such will have their hierarchical positions actualized in the material order as well as in the spiritual; for between the material and the spiritual order upon the natural level no sharp distinctions can be drawn. And they will have these positions made concrete not only in due assignments of prestige and honor, but in just awards of material amenities as well.

This new social hierarchy will also greatly broaden downward toward its base. It is more than probable that the great majority of men and women will continue to have neither the intellectual talents nor the personal inclinations which will fit them for highly specialized technical tasks. Fewer still, relatively, will have the natural endowments and tastes which the exclusively intellectual or purely artistic life requires. Corresponding to this fact, it is also reasonably certain that the expanding productive work of society, both material and spiritual,¹⁰ will give employment to this human majority of more modest gifts, in activities concerned more largely with physical operations. Machines and technical devices, however perfected, will continue to need many more people to operate them than will be required either for their administrative management or for their technical invention and repair. Municipalities, however well planned, will require greater numbers of people working in their lighting or sewage disposal plants, than they will in a city manager's office. Railways will continue to employ more people in their train crews than on their engineering staffs; opera houses will have more scene shifters and electricians than impresarios and prima donnas; farms will need more workers in the fields than at desks; the intellectual life, looked upon as a whole, will have greater numbers of stenographers, typesetters and makers of books, than authors; and a single great thinker in scientific fields will, as always, keep an untold number of lesser intellects, technicians and laboratory experts, in continual directed employment.¹¹

¹⁰ "Spiritual" is here used to include intellectual, aesthetic, as well as specifically religious, activities.

¹¹ Oscar Wilde in his essay, *The Soul of Man Under Socialism* seems to conclude that in a Socialist order which is provided with a sufficient number and variety of mechanical devices, perhaps all manual jobs, and certainly all

Illustrations of this kind need not be multiplied. However, the most notable thing about the hierarchy of a redeemed society will not be that it will exhibit an even wider variety of functions than we may now imagine; but the notable thing will be rather that these functions will be distributed rationally according to the tastes and gifts or the capacities of its members, and upon no other basis. Authority of every sort will be bestowed by a democratic process of common consent upon those to whom it reasonably belongs, and upon a basis of such persons' fitness to have it delegated to them. By the same token, obedience will be given not as of slavish necessity by people in fear of their lives—or their jobs—but as by free men giving a rational allegiance to those whom they recognize as having an intrinsic authority of knowledge and wisdom, and whom they therefore elect to place in hierarchical positions of power corresponding to those particular capacities.

Above all, the ranks of this hierarchy will be kept accessible to all men and women, the only key necessary to unlock the doors leading to ascending grades being the acquisition of the necessary capacities for exercising the prerogatives of higher positions. On the other hand, the members of a redeemed society will be taught to know that it is more honorable to exercise a modest capacity well, than it is to attempt something above that capacity and do it badly. This does not mean that people must be taught to "know their places" in any sense of arbitrarily discouraging them from rising in the hierarchy. But it does mean that people will be helped and encouraged to find their true niches, as the saying is, and having found them, whatever they may be, they will be honored for the good performance of functions both necessary and dignified within the social whole.

menial tasks, can be eliminated. The result of this, he thinks, will be that everyone, instead of a minority, will tend to occupy what we have here thought of as upper places in the social hierarchy. In principle there is no argument against this, but the suggestion seems fantastic, since there is no present evidence either that we shall ever invent the requisite machines, or that the majority of people will *want* to embrace the immensely arduous tasks of the intellectual or other branches of the spiritual life. However, a great many of our present menial activities will doubtless be eliminated, through the invention of new machinery.

It will be easier to make people realize the intrinsic dignity of every kind of work, be it high or low in the hierarchy, and to make them happy and enthusiastic in whatever labor is found to correspond to their special capacities, because this rational hierarchy which assigns its positions according to actual capacities will not, on the other hand, distribute its rewards or material returns with anything like the huge discrepancies to which we are at present accustomed. In a world which can begin to put into effect an "economy of abundance," the average incomes of all the people can be revised upward to an amazing degree; and it is quite possible that for work well done and faithfully performed in any hierarchical rank, high or low, there may be allotted to the worker all the material good things and all the opportunities for greater cultural development which he himself, as an intelligent and free citizen, may deem necessary for his particular social station. The social slogan "from every man according to his abilities and to every man according to his needs," expresses, in the world of our modern resources, not only a realizable social goal, but also a justice conformable to the Kingdom of God.¹²

It will thus come about that those functions of authoritative rule, of the exertion of social power or even of compulsion, if this is needed—functions which we now voluntarily entrust only to our chosen representatives in the political democracy of the State—will come to reside to an ever increasing degree in the

¹² If this seems to shock our present sense of justice, this is because we have been conditioned to believe that not only must the higher ranking members of our actual hierarchy have great material rewards, but that the lower ranks must receive comparatively little, even though we can, if we wish, produce a great abundance for all people. In other words, our idea of justice requires not only a high payment for "important" work, but also an actual withholding of "too large" payments for "unimportant" work, even when this withholding involves, as it now does, the destruction of surplus food, clothing and other material goods. We have got the notion that we would "spoil" the workers of the world, if we let them get too much. There is something strangely vindictive at the root of this idea of justice. Furthermore, it is irrational. It would be well for Christians, in this connection, to ponder how much any of them would receive, if God bestowed food and clothing upon them according to their "merits" in the sight of His Perfection. This thought should make us realize that God's Justice is not of this warped and human sort, but that instead, He makes His sun to rise upon the evil as well as upon the good, and sends rain upon the unjust as well as upon the just. (Matt. 5:45.)

persons of those individuals who occupy outstanding positions of authority in our *rational* hierarchy. And in such a rational hierarchy individuals will hold their positions not primarily as political functionaries, but instead, as individuals of proved superior gifts and abilities in the many and diverse fields of the social and economic structure.¹³ This means, in other words, that, in a redeemed society, the authority which we experience under forms of social compulsion and the enforcement of discipline, and which resides in our political state, will come to be merged with that other and much more rational hierarchical authority which flows from the possession of outstanding personal worth, superior knowledge, exceptional skills; and finally from the commanding wisdom of true philosophers and sages.¹⁴

In our present world, we have become accustomed to a constant conflict between the authorities and powers vested in our political democracy and the even greater powers which, although partly veiled by a sort of pretense that they do not exist at all, reside nevertheless in our real hierarchs of wealth by virtue of their control of capital. We have, in fact, come to think of "Democracy" as a means whereby the common, average, non-propertied people of the country may at least keep some semblance of control or check over their real and utterly undemocratic hierarchical masters. The true welfare of the masses does not coincide with the welfare of our hierarchs, and we therefore conceive of Democracy only in terms of the more or less free assertion of social disagreements which arise from this state of affairs and which we accept as inevitable. Democracy to us has come to mean a reflection, in political battles and contests, of deep conflicts between economic, sectional and class interests, which it seldom occurs to us might be eliminated altogether.

However, as soon as the true interests of the people, which are now somewhat inadequately defended by our political de-

¹³ Examples of this are even now found in China where, for many centuries, a scholar or sage, by virtue of his hierarchical eminence, solely because of his attainments in the things of the intellect and because of his wisdom, has also been assigned a very real authority of deference, which can override the political powers of civil governors, or even of emperors themselves.

¹⁴ Note the record concerning Our Lord, that "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes." Mark 1:22.

mocracy only, become identified with the well-being of an all-embracing, rational, democratic social hierarchy, these political controversies, although they now appear to us to be the very breath of "Democracy," will subside, as the economic conflicts upon which they are based themselves disappear. Discrepancy between popular will and hierarchical well-being and stability will be reduced to a minimum. Free rational obedience on the part of the members of our social order, given voluntarily to hierarchs whose authority derives from recognized social value and personal worth, can take the place of that constraint of the great majority on behalf of the interests of unworthy and unrespected hierarchs, which is now unwillingly borne.

Strangely enough, when social serenity and functional tranquillity begin to appear as fruits of this kind of widely ordered and rational Democracy, the new social order is at first difficult for us to recognize as a "Democracy" at all. We are so accustomed to the use of our own democracy as an arena of conflict between sectional and class economic groups that, when these conflicts begin to be eliminated, we immediately suspect that the trick must have been accomplished by a "dictatorship." We have to learn, therefore, that in a democracy fully achieved, we could establish an hierarchical order in which these conflicts to which we are now conditioned would disappear in the natural course of events. It would be well if critics of the present widening Soviet democracy would recall that the absence of so-called "opposition political parties" there, does not necessarily mean that these have invariably been arbitrarily suppressed. They might have simply ceased to exist; for opposition may be eliminated in quite another manner from suppression, while full democratic participation of the people is triumphantly preserved. It may be eliminated by the setting up of a functionally unified social order in which there begins to be little or nothing for the masses of the people to oppose.¹⁵

¹⁵ This must not be interpreted to mean that wide and popular differences of opinion concerning all sorts of things, from production policies to decisions about the theatre or the circulation of literature, may not continue in a redeemed order. On the contrary, these are the kinds of problems with which a rational democracy will continually concern itself. However, such problems will be shifted into another plane. They will become intellectual or aesthetic, as the case may be, and their solutions will be arrived at on rational grounds. As things

The socialization of natural resources and of our means of industrial production, together with an accompanying broadening of our democratic processes so that these penetrate every branch of corporate activity and provide the possibility of a genuine popular control of every phase of social life, will enable us to rid ourselves of our present social hierarchy, established solely on a basis of capital ownership, and to establish another hierarchy, based on rational principles and corresponding more nearly to the high potentialities resident in a redeemed human nature. We must guard ourselves, however, from the uncritical conclusion that this new social hierarchy which we desire, will somehow grow automatically, merely because we have, as it were, cleared the ground for it by taking the initial steps of socializing capital wealth and broadening our democracy. Without these two great and revolutionary steps, probably little or no further progress can at present be made in the direction of a Catholic order. Nevertheless, when these steps are once taken, let us not imagine that a redeemed and perfected order is, of itself alone, inevitable.

We have said that the new order must be a rational one, which means that its hierarchical principles must be discovered and elaborated by the rational intellect of man, and that these principles, so discovered, must be applied in practice by the exercise of an intelligent will. New standards or bases must be set up, intelligently thought out and rationally directed, upon

are with us, a "decision," for example, to raise our customs duties on some commodity, is actually reducible to the political triumph of a special group of people, who stand to make greater profits when that particular tariff is raised. It is invariably very far from a true rational decision based upon what is found, on intellectual analysis, to be economically the best policy for the welfare of all the people. In our Capitalist system, no economic policy whatever is ever best for all of the people at one time, but only for certain people at the expense of the rest. Obviously, a decision of policy under such conditions is not so much a sober objective judgment, based upon rational analysis, as it is the winning of a fight between enemy groups. In a redeemed order, since all the people will stand either to gain or to lose together as a single society, through every judgment of policy which they make, a much greater objectivity can be had. Political parties, as we know them, will be unnecessary, because parties are only necessary in a system which makes its decisions on the principle of winning fights between factions. This does not mean, however, that in a rational redeemed order the people will not participate in their social decisions or that this order will not be completely democratic.

which the diverse individual capacities of men and women may be evaluated in terms of ordered social requirements, and in accordance with which individuals may have their hierarchical social ranks, together with their authorities in appropriate spheres of action, assigned to them.

The most obvious standard for a social hierarchy, and the one which would probably be advanced as not only obvious, but also as sufficient, by the majority of present-day secular humanists, is that of social usefulness. Men and women will have hierarchical positions assigned to them, carrying, of course, corresponding sets of individual privileges and rewards, according to their technical and intellectual capacities for doing socially useful work, manual, intellectual or other. At first glance, this standard seems sufficiently straightforward and uncomplicated, both in its interpretation and its application to individual cases. More particularly, in a youthful and expanding social order which, in the nature of the case, will probably be almost exclusively preoccupied with the development of its natural resources and with the production of an abundance of material necessities for all of its members, this principle of hierarchy will probably seem so clear, that no subtle difficulties in the interpretation of what is meant by "socially useful" will even so much as arise. That will be socially useful which facilitates the manufacture and distribution of food and clothing and good housing for the masses of the people.

However, even during the early stages of a new social development, when a material emphasis may appear the principal one, it will soon be evident that the idea of social usefulness cannot be adequately defined in terms of quantities of material goods produced. As a matter of fact, such a limited definition would not take us far beyond our present basis of hierarchical judgments. It must soon become clear that decisions must also be made as to which and what kinds of material goods are more important and more socially useful than certain others. Some rational principle must guide such decisions as, for example, whether to produce more motor cars for pleasure than for motor transport, because questions of this kind are sure to become matters of doubt or of indecision at some stage of social devel-

opment. Some rational authority must decide in such matters as, whether it is more important to have more moving picture houses than theatres, or vice versa; some wisdom must be invoked to tell us whether playgrounds for children or holiday resorts for adults are more urgent at a particular time; whether the food supply for communities shall be organized through community kitchens or through facilities of small units and in private dwellings; whether or not it is better to publish more light literature than serious reading; whether equipments for abstract scientific investigations are more needed in a particular social situation than laboratories for applied engineering. As technical facilities increase, and as decisions about production in the material order, together with the provision of equipment for all kinds of social activities, cease to be matters of "either-or" for the reason that practically all material equipment can be produced in any desired quantity, decisions still more difficult, because more profound, will have to be made concerning what material goods and provisions, among all the abundance available, will be "best" for men and what ones are less desirable, or, perhaps, actually detrimental to their welfare.

Judgments concerning questions of this sort, even while they still appear to lie principally in the material order of society, will soon be found to depend upon other much deeper and more spiritual choices. For example, it must eventually make a considerable difference in the hierarchical importance assigned to the radio manufacturing industry and to the functions of those who work in it, what judgments have already been passed upon the cultural value of technical inventions and devices in general. Merely because we have achieved a socialized production economy and a democratic participation in all our corporate affairs, is no guarantee that men will attribute, through a sort of untutored, blind, but at the same time infallible instinct, their due and proper social usefulness to such things. It is possible, indeed, that men should become completely preoccupied in technical devices, as absorbingly good things in and for themselves alone. Comforts and machines and those who make them, might come to be placed at the very top of our hierarchy of social values. We should then develop what

might be called a "gadget culture"; while the quality of the uses to which our technical devices are to be put, might long remain a matter of comparative indifference.¹⁶ On the other hand, technical equipments, on some other basis of evaluation, might fall into a relatively low hierarchical rank.¹⁷ Radios, again for example, might be valued, not primarily as absorbingly interesting devices in themselves, apart from the qualities of their uses, but instead, primarily because they may serve as a means of spreading knowledge, propagating good music, or bringing the experience of other lofty elements of the spiritual life to the masses of the people. In this case, the activities of those men and women who are the sources of the knowledge, or who write the music which is broadcast on the radio, will have a higher hierarchical rank than the functions of those who merely devise and operate the radio apparatus. It is quite conceivable, however, that men might exalt social activities which need manual labor to higher hierarchical positions than those which require the attention of the rational intellect alone. In this case, the production efforts of people who work with their minds, would come to be looked upon as mere adjuncts of the functions of those who work with their hands. Eventually some judgment will have to be given to decide questions of this sort concerning the most desirable precedence of social values.¹⁸

Value judgments of this kind, upon which the whole cultural climate of any social order may depend, whether they are made and promulgated by one man, by a few leaders or by a democratic majority, will always have to be made upon a basis of a clear and rational conception of what constitutes the Good Life for man. The determination of the relative social dignities of the various activities of all men and the evaluation of the hierarchical order of social functions, not only for the material

¹⁶ We are already familiar with the taste which prefers to get a record number of distant stations upon a radio, regardless of what is heard or how it is received. Some sort of fragmentary noises from tremendous distances are preferred to continuous good music from near at home. This is "gadget culture."

¹⁷ To have a low hierarchical rank assigned to it is far from saying that a certain thing is without value, or unnecessary.

¹⁸ This particular question has already arisen to trouble the Soviet Union. It has been found necessary to issue warnings to the effect that workers with their hands must not look down upon brain workers, as if the latter were engaged in work of an inferior dignity.

order, but for the intellectual and aesthetic spheres of life as well, is, as Plato first clearly saw, a profound philosophical question. It is, in a sense, *the* philosophical question. Therefore, in a redeemed order, these value distinctions and judgments will be made upon the basis of deep philosophical insights into the requirements of true human nature, and from the point of view of a Christian conception concerning man's highest good and his final end.

Knowledge of that rational hierarchy of values which, within the sphere of our natural creation, must govern a society corresponding to the requirements of a redeemed humanity, is not the exclusive possession of Christians. The actual promulgation of this desired order of values, and its maintenance as a social actuality, can, as we shall presently see, be perfectly accomplished only within the Process of the Incarnation. However, the knowledge of that order, in so far as it concerns the natural world alone, may be truly discovered by the light of man's natural reason. This knowledge is, in fact, our own great cultural heritage in the Classic philosophical tradition which stems from Plato and Aristotle.¹⁹

At the head of a rational social hierarchy, the functions of those who are concerned exclusively with the contemplation of what are, as it were, the very sources of its rationality, will stand supreme. Within this highest hierarchical level we shall find working those Theologian-Philosophers who, because of their reasoned knowledge and on account of their understanding, completed in the Christian revelation, of the nature and will of God and because of their consequent wisdom, their insights into

¹⁹ Classic Philosophy is part of the so-called Evangelical Preparation for the Incarnation. The Evangelical Preparation has reference to the work of the Holy Ghost, working within the disorders of natural creation prior to Our Lord's birth, in such wise that what we have called the "soil of the world" should be made fertile and as little intractable as possible, for the growth of the re-creating Organism of the Incarnation. On the material, political and social side, this Preparation is found in the political unity of the known world, with its technical facilities, its civilization and its tranquillity under the rule of Rome. On its intellectual side, this work of the Holy Ghost is found in the flowering of Greek Philosophy, which provided the rationally ordered intellectual concepts for the systematic setting forth of the fullness of Christian theological doctrine, and which also carried to completion the intellectual enquiry into the requirements of the Good Life for rational man.

the fundamental constitution of the Good Life, and their intellectual grasp of its content, will, by common consent and popular acclaim, be accepted and freely followed as enunciating the guiding principles of the social order. For it is upon these principles, thus enunciated, that the whole natural order of man's corporate life, both in its material and spiritual aspects, must be regulated; and it is to these principles that the production of the socially useful, again whether material or spiritual, must be attuned.

Immediately below the hierarchical level within which these spiritual and intellectual leaders are active, will be esteemed the functions of those intellectual workers who ponder and enunciate the principles of behavior of our natural world; for it is this kind of intellectual work which opens the way to man's widening rational understanding and control of all the realms of God's creation which make up the natural environment of human life.

Next we shall find ranked the activities of those who mediate the deep principles of Theology and Philosophy to the rest of mankind, in order that the concordant truths disclosed in both rational philosophy and revealed religion may be unerringly applied to the whole order of life. Together with these will also be grouped the functions of imparting and distributing the knowledge which scientific thinkers formulate. Here we shall have the hierarchical level of the teaching office, and within it will be found those chiefly occupied in the essential tasks of education. This hierarchical level lies, in a sense, within the partition between the social functions which are concerned only with the work of the rational mind, and those concerned with practical and administrative affairs.

From the level of Theology and Philosophy, concerned with enquiries into deep knowledge of the nature of Reality itself, we descend through the level of what is sometimes called "pure science," through the level of educational processes, to the level of all those activities which have to do with the practical administration of living. Here we shall find the tasks of the planning of production according to social requirements, of the just distribution of all good things, the making available to all men,

in just proportion, the myriad material and spiritual amenities potential in our modern world. Here we shall find the activities now allotted to our political administrators, the sounding out of public opinion and the general planning and supervision of a democratic process much more extensive and thoroughgoing than any which we know at present. At this social level will labor our industrial executives, our administrators of all kinds, our statesmen and our ambassadors between various social and industrial groups.²⁰

Beneath the social level of administration will be the level of the practical execution of administrative plans. Here will be found all those who are immediately employed in the actual manufacture and the physical distribution of our material equipments of every variety, in the maintenance of our means of communication and transport, in the full and intelligent exploitation of our natural resources, and in the seeking out of new resources of materials of potential value in the fuller life of man. At this hierarchical level we shall find employed in their appropriate functional activities, our technical experts, our engineers, our skilled artisans and workmen, our manual laborers of every occupation.

It would be tempting to pursue this question of a hierarchical society further and to fill in each of its levels with the great wealth of detailed callings and functions appropriate to it. In the foregoing meagre outline, after the manner of brief notes, nothing has been said of, for example, music and the other fine arts, or of how the latter may both serve the purposes of various hierarchical levels, and embellish the works which proceed from them.²¹ No attempt has been made to assign to their hierarchical places all the specialized professions; or to rank the various

²⁰ Needless to say, the intriguing, spying organizations which are the agents of international competition between Capitalist states, and which we know under the name of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps, will be unknown in a redeemed world order. We will, however, continue to have need of various kinds of liaison officers between social and technical groups.

²¹ A redeemed order will know nothing of "pure art" if by this is meant what is called "art for art's sake." This catch-phrase can seem sensible only to people who have lost their sense of rational ordered ends, and, specifically, of the final end of all creation. Nothing can be for its own sake alone, within a created order, but only for the sake of some human end, and through that, for the sake of God.

agencies of material production according to the dignities of the social ends which they may serve. To review these matters adequately would require a separate treatise. The chief point to be made here is that a redeemed social order will rest upon a rational basis and, in its ascending hierarchical levels, will correspond to the true order of a fully actualized human nature, an order which is that of the social extension of the perfect humanity which was the achievement of Our Lord Himself.

It is important to emphasize that we have been speaking here of an hierarchical order of social functions and activities only. We have been assigning social values to different kinds of work in order to indicate, or at least to illustrate, the quality of the serried order necessary to a rational redeemed society. We must, however, warn ourselves against the serious error of seeming to confuse the values of human workers themselves with the social hierarchical values assigned to their work. The values of men and women as individuals must not be confounded with the values of their designated social functions.²² For example, in the foregoing discussion we have been emphasizing the supreme social importance of Theology and Philosophy in any social order which may claim to offer full opportunities for the development of the Good Life for man. This is, however, a very different thing from saying that all individual philosophers are in some sense "better" than, let us say, all individual street sweepers. The functions which philosophers are called upon to perform in a rational society are, from the social point of view, of greater value than the functions delegated to street sweepers. However, certain functions are delegated to philosophers, not because they are "better" people than street sweepers, or because they are more deserving in some moral sense. Philosophical enquiry must be put into the hands of certain people because they alone have the intellectual and other personal equipments to deal with the problems which require a philosophical solution. But street sweeping is delegated to certain other people upon the same kinds of rational grounds, namely because

²² To make such a confusion in practice is to set up a society of regimented slaves. It is the chief and central confusion of the contemporary totalitarianisms. It is the Materialist delusion.

they too have capacities which find a most suitable and harmonious application in the highly necessary social task of keeping the streets clean. Theology and Philosophy, considered in respect to the functions which they possess relative to the ordering of the whole social and spiritual life of man, are the most dignified and exalted of human disciplines. Therefore, considered only from the point of view of social hierarchical rank, Theology is "better" than street sweeping. However, this is a very different thing from saying that all Theologians, simply because they are occupied in the highest of human rational disciplines, are, by that fact alone, finer or better people than street sweepers. To say this would be precisely to identify individuals with their social functions. Relative values of individuals are to be judged not on a basis of comparing the ranks of the hierarchical levels containing their respective activities, but rather upon a basis of the human qualities which they create in the courses of those activities. Human beings, as beings created potentially in the image of God, are to be evaluated not upon a basis of what their functions are, but on a basis of how they function; not upon a basis of what they do, but upon a basis of what they are, through that doing.

In other words, people are admirable, are valuable *as human beings* in the natural order, in proportion as they achieve, in addition to a full development of all their other natural capacities, a development of the natural virtues. These natural virtues potential in human nature are summed up in the classical categories of Wisdom, Courage, Temperance and Justice. Since it is possible for all men, regardless of the hierarchical level of their functions in the natural social order, to become wise, courageous, temperate and just, all men are potentially of equal value, as beings created in the image of God; and their individual relative values *as men*, in the social order, must be judged upon the basis of their relative achievements of these virtues. And, as a matter of fact, it is only in proportion as men achieve virtue within the social order, that it will be possible to maintain that order's rational hierarchical existence at all.

Another way of putting this is to say that the reason why a rational social order is required, is that men and women can

best become truly virtuous only while at the same time exercising all their other natural capacities, both intellectual and practical. That is, the natural virtues can flourish fully only within a social order which is rational, democratic and hierarchical, because what we have called "redeemed behavior" will be appropriate to every phase of action only within such an order; and, therefore, will be as completely possible in no other order whatever. For, if men are to perfect themselves in virtue they must not be hampered and hindered by being held arbitrarily in an hierarchical level of activity lower than some other to which their natural gifts and capacities give them a right to aspire. Men may, it is true, achieve virtue, in some sense, even in the midst of frustrations within a disordered social hierarchy, as for example, within our present one. However, this is not an acceptable state of affairs from the Christian point of view. The virtue of Justice, for example, achieved in an order which imposes continuing injustice upon individual behavior, can be achieved only in a highly contingent manner. Unless an individual, under such circumstances, works at the same time for the establishment of a more just social order, his own fragmentary achievements of just behavior remain mutilated things. In other words, no Christian may permit himself to take the remediable contingencies or frustrations of a bad natural order, as it were, "lying down." This would be a false humility, which, in a sense, would "tempt" or "overwork" Our Lord's atoning power in that individual life. In order to achieve the natural virtues in their fullness, without calling upon Our Lord's Atonement to cover more defects and contingencies than it is actually intended to cover, man's individual capacities and varying endowments of all kinds must be provided with full and appropriate outlets for their abundant exercise. Such outlets a rational, democratic, hierarchical social order alone will provide.

However, the virtues transcend all technical skills and are not contingent upon the peculiar details proper to particular vocational callings. They may therefore be equally perfected through habitual actions which are appropriate to any one or more of the social hierarchical levels proper to a redeemed

order. And all men, if they have perfected themselves in virtue, may be judged as truly equal, while at the same time they remain engaged in a wide diversity of social functions of varying hierarchical importance. For we must remember always, that *man is not made to serve the purposes of some imposed ideal order*, but that, instead, this re-created order is sought to serve the purposes of the perfection of man.²³

Thus will the re-perfection of our social order on the natural level, serve as a foundation for the re-perfection of man within it. But, as we have already seen, man's final end is not to be ultimately attained within our natural creation. Man's perfection, formed upon this world, must be received out of nature into super-nature through the Incarnation Process, and be united to God. It follows therefore, that the highest and, at the same time, the most characteristic activity of all men within a redeemed world, will be the activity of Worship and Sacrifice. Ultimately, all perfection and order within creation take their true values from the fact that they make possible a worthy offering to God. The perfection of the earthly Kingdom of God is precious not for itself as its own end, but because, under the forms of bread and wine it may be lifted up upon the Christian Altar of Sacramental Sacrifice, and be received into Our Lord's Ascended Life. Through the Christian Sacrifice, all natural perfections within the human order, culminating in the perfection of the natural virtues of men, are exalted into the supernatural level of being. Then, when subsequently returned again, as they always are, into human hands, they inform the whole natural order, so long as it shall last, with a Divine Life flowing from Our Lord. Within a perfected human order, the natural virtues of Wisdom, Courage, Temperance and Justice may, by the grace of God, be matured among men. But natural virtue, upon the Altar of the Christian Sacrifice, will ever be transubstantiated into its supernatural counterpart and then, upon being given back to men in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, will continue to inform the natural order with an infusion of supernatural grace. The substance of natural Wis-

²³ Compare Our Lord's words (Mark 2:27): "The Sabbath (an important element in His contemporary social process) was made for man; not man for the Sabbath."

dom is ever transubstantiated into the Substance of Divine Faith, which gives singleness of purpose to men, sets their affections without deviation upon things above, and directs the human will unwaveringly to God alone as man's final end. The substance of natural Courage becomes the Substance of Divine Hope, that men may never falter or be saddened into inaction by our world's inevitable contingencies and mortalities. The substance of natural Justice is received into the Substance of Divine Love, that men may be firmly bound together in a single unity, a corporate human order which, when once achieved, may never be dispersed because it is also bound within the Person of Our Lord. Thus, natural human virtue will be infused with Christian Sanctity. Our natural order will not only be redeemed, but will be made supernaturally glorious in the sight of men and God.

For these reasons, the central Act, which will be the primary concern of a redeemed order in this world, will be the sacrificial lifting up of that order to God. Through that Door, which is Our Lord present upon every Altar, the substance of the redeemed natural world is carried beyond nature into the place whither Our Lord Himself has gone. It is lifted up, out of time into eternity, out of space into infinity and into the supernatural level of man's final end. The human offerings of bread and wine, transubstantiated into Our Lord's Body and His Blood, are borne by the hand of God's holy Angel to His Altar on high.²⁴ The created world, perfected in time and space, ascends the eternal heights of Heaven, where Angels, Saints and Holy Ones fall down before Him that sitteth on the throne, where the four and twenty Elders cast their crowns before the crystal sea, where the incense of prayer rises as from golden bowls, where all creation rests not day nor night from its great Trisagion: Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, which was and which is and which is to come; and where we too, when Our Lord's earthly Kingdom shall be consummated, as fellow

²⁴ These words are from the Canon of the Western Mass.

members of His Risen Body, the Catholic Church Triumphant, shall one day have our place among that Blessed Company. In that Last Day, creation having fulfilled its final purpose, God alone shall be all in all.

Deo Gratias

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